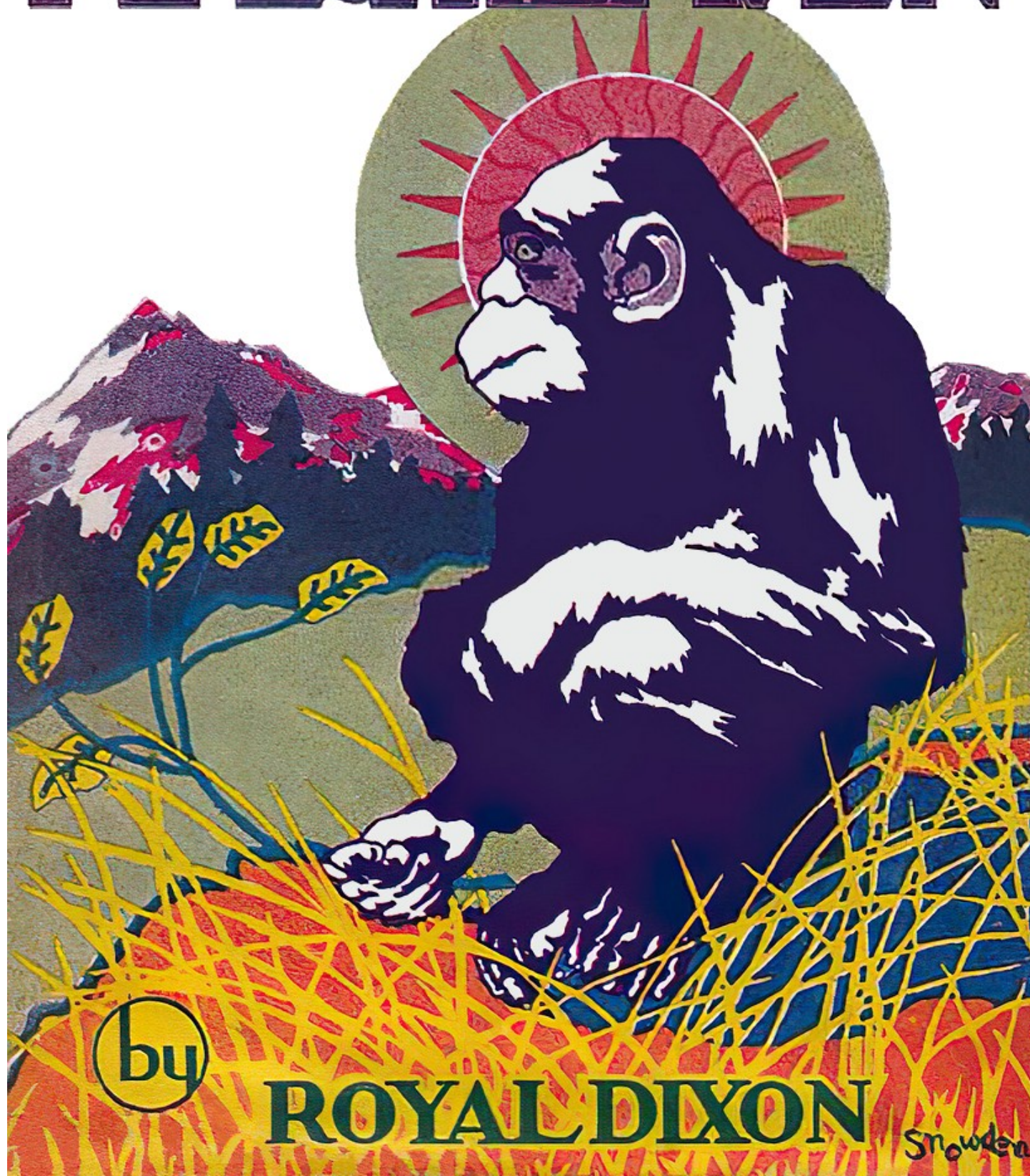


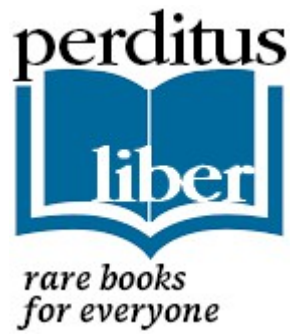
The APE of HEAVEN



by

ROYAL DIXON

Snowden



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OCLC: 2429588

book:

The Ape of Heaven

by

Royal Dixon

Published 1936

The
APE OF HEAVEN

The APE OF HEAVEN

By
ROYAL DIXON

Author of "The Human Side of Animals," "The Human Side
of Plants," "Wildwood Friends."



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Contents

Chapter One	Chapter Eighteen
Chapter Two	Chapter Nineteen
Chapter Three	Chapter Twenty
Chapter Four	Chapter Twenty-One
Chapter Five	Chapter Twenty-Two
Chapter Six	Chapter Twenty-Three
Chapter Seven	Chapter Twenty-Four
Chapter Eight	Chapter Twenty-Five
Chapter Nine	Chapter Twenty-Six
Chapter Ten	Chapter Twenty-Seven
Chapter Eleven	Chapter Twenty-Eight
Chapter Twelve	Chapter Twenty-Nine
Chapter Thirteen	Chapter Thirty
Chapter Fourteen	Chapter Thirty-One
Chapter Fifteen	Chapter Thirty-Two
Chapter Sixteen	Chapter Thirty-Three
Chapter Seventeen	About the Author

To

CHESTER SNOWDEN

J. ARVID PETERSON

GUILFORD V. SMITH

Plus sage que les sages

FOREWORD

One Sunday morning as I was making ready for church, Mr. Royal Dixon graciously claimed a moment of my time to read me the first chapter of this book. When he ended my first words were—"Go on." I forgot days and seasons and years; I listened to the reading of the entire book, and the afternoon was on when the last word was read concerning Hilda.

In my modest experience as writer, editor, reader far and wide, a new day had dawned. At last an animal had received a spiritual interpretation. I was reënforced in a lifelong conviction that "God loves all things great and small," and the line between the human and the animal had grown dim. Hilda had emerged out of the jungle with the rights man must respect, with capacities that only the superficial dare deny, with a soul as sweet and clean and recognizable as He had in mind who bade grown folks believe "Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom."

Mr. Dixon has opened wide the door that leads out of the jungle into human comradeship. Readers of this unusual book will pause before they give to animals

i

the smaller place in human interest and human love they have occupied in all the ages past.

No, I am no scientist, though I have read much for years in science. I am no theologian, though I am a graduate of a theological seminary as well as of several other institutions. I am no "best seller," though I have perpetrated many books upon the world and I now have a monthly reading audience of millions.

But twenty years of reading manuscripts—turning down most of them—has given me some right to pass upon a book.

The privilege of writing this little foreword to one of the most original books of the time, I have claimed because Hilda is to me a living personality. She deserves to be known far and wide for her worth and exquisite charm. Congratulations to Mr. Dixon. Congratulations manifold to those who, through his foresight, insight, imaginative reach, and courageous interpretation of the depths of personality, never plumbed before, at last meet Hilda.

—LYMAN P. POWELL.

INTRODUCTION

You may be surprised and at the same time marvel at this strange story. It is not told you in the belief that its believers shall be legion. No! Allah be praised if only a few accept it with the same faith that prompts its recital. For many years of scientific work and study have taught me that truth is rarely accepted at first. Man's brain is not prepared to receive new facts, or little known facts, except in small doses. And he who proclaims them must be prepared to be classed immediately with "Ananias and Sapphira."

Why this story of Hilda came to me, and in the strange way that it did, I am totally unable to explain. I only know that it came, and how it came, not exactly in every detail as I have told it, but with all the outstanding facts precisely as they are related.

From the first moment that I heard it, it so gripped me that I could do nothing but think of it until it found a sympathetic lodgment in my consciousness. Many of my friends will be deeply shocked at it; others will praise its message and understand why I have told it. The Fates have chosen me to tell the story to the world, and I shall do it.

Years of careful research have taught me that

iii

Africa is the greatest treasure house for those who would learn of our nearest kinspeople among the animals—the apes. That they are frightfully human in all ways, highly intelligent, and even capable of being educated in a small degree, I am told by no less an authority than the late Professor Richard L. Garner, director of the recent expedition of the Smithsonian Institution to the French Congo, and the world's recognized authority on the anthropoid ape.

Professor Garner spent more than twenty-seven years of his life in studying animal intelligence in the jungles of Africa. In writing of the anthropoids and their marvelous intelligence, he said, "... And of this the jungle gave me abundant proofs. Somewhere between the highest of the chimpanzees and the lowest of mankind there was an animal, or there were animals, with mentalities in between the ape and man. That is a 'Missing Link.' It is a mental link, however, instead of a physical link.... All the higher animals are communal, which is to say that they have vague ideas

about marriage, family life, a feeble sense of right and wrong and of justice, and a slight idea of government as is evidenced by several apes abiding by the judgment of a patriarchal ape ... From this intimate study of animals I have exploded for myself many a popular belief concerning them; also I have learned truths which may at first seem almost more mythlike.”

iv

This is how the story came to me. It was in October, 1919; I was lecturing daily in the big hospitals at Joinville-le-Pont, just out of Paris. Most of the sick soldiers there were American aviators; but somehow it happened that a young English Chaplain, the Reverend Chester Hungerford, who had been badly wounded at Chateau-Thierry, had been at this hospital for some time.

I shall never forget the day and circumstance under which I met him. As usual I spoke before a large number of wounded and sick men in the hospital, and on this day, amidst hundreds of closely crowded cots, my eyes fell upon this remarkable young man. Something prompted me to speak with him, and strangely enough I found him reading one of my nature books. A friendship sprang up between us at once, and a deep confidence was soon established. He talked freely and of many things, apparently glad to find an interested listener. He told me of his four years in the jungles of Africa; of the strange and remarkable story of Hilda, and how she came to him; of her tribe and their humanlike customs and of his own unusual beliefs about Hilda. He told me also about Lady Cornelia, and of his faithful Rimpano—and even of Bishop Braithwaite from whom he had an unopened letter. He asked me to act as his mouthpiece to the public—to let the facts be

v

known; to be the messenger of truth that the world might know of his discovery.

As a farewell greeting I promised him that I would obey his request. So a double responsibility rests upon me to tell this story just as I heard it: but I have found it extremely difficult. It is so delicate; so different from any other story, I believe, that has ever been told; so bordering upon the scientific and yet overlapping the religious at every corner, that I am frightened. Not that I fear because of it to lose the small amount of scientific standing my many books and years of research have given me;

but lest the story be misunderstood, and my friend's record of Hilda be for no purpose, and that my friend, whom I somehow hope to meet again, be displeased.

After the story was written, I desired to tell it to someone who would understand, and the opportunity came one night, just three days before the late Professor Garner died. We were being entertained at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Garfield Learned at Grammercy Park, New York, when Professor Garner and I sat together. There were many celebrities present, but we found time to speak alone and revive an old friendship—and I told him briefly the story of Hilda.

"You have it, you have it," he said. " 'The Ape of Heaven' will never be forgotten—and Hilda will live. But don't publish it yet; wait until the time is ripe.

vi

It is only a matter of a very few years when our leading psychologists will study the anthropoids scientifically in laboratory stations suited to their needs. Then publish the book."

How quickly has Professor Garner's prediction come true! Today the scientific world is deeply interested in the apes, man's first cousins, who are being studied by Yale in a 200-acre laboratory station which is located in Florida. In all the world there are hardly a half dozen places where anthropoids are studied scientifically by psychologists. World famous are the researches of Professor Robert M. Yerkes of the Department of Psychology at Yale, who will direct the Florida station, where he will have the opportunity to expand the work already accomplished. Among his most famous writings are, "The Mind of A Gorilla," "Almost Human," and "Chimpanzee Intelligence" written with Learned.

All I hope to do with "The Ape of Heaven" is to gain for it a sympathetic reading before any condemnation is offered. Then you must determine for yourself if Hilda's life has been in vain.

—ROYAL DIXON.

New York, N. Y.
November, 1936.

vii

CHAPTER I.

THE JUNGLE OPENS

HUGE elephants had cut paths through the forest with their ivory tusks. Smaller animals had followed after them and trampled the paths into rough-hewn highways. Hungerford smiled to himself as he thought how convenient these would be in traveling back and forth between his thatched quarters and the Post to the north, and the Mission to the west. "Say, friend, we are at the center of things," he replied to a chattering monkey in the upper branch of a tree which overhung his small clearing.

On three sides of this clearing the jungle rose like a wall, broken only by the dim entrances of the trails. On the fourth was a narrow river, whose opposite bank was bordered by a wilderness of mangroves; their twisted roots twined like serpents along the brink of the stream. Only when some water bird, in its quick splash after a fish, broke the sun-dazzled surface, or when the long protruding snout of a slowly swimming crocodile plowed through the water, causing ripples to spread on either side, did the clear metallic sheet become ruffled.

1

The bamboo shack which Hungerford now called home consisted of two small rooms with a screened porch at the front. Nearby was an even cruder hut in which lived Rimpano, his African servant. Its architecture differed in no respect from any of the homes in the native village. It was a small, round, one-roomed dwelling with a sharply conical thatched roof of dried grass. By the side of Rimpano's house Hungerford's quarters, modest as they were, appeared pretentious and lacked no requisite of simple comfort. The two structures were surrounded by a strong stockade for protection against wild animals. In the daytime, the wide gate in front, facing the river, was kept open.

One mile to the north was the little British outpost of Rambunda where a score of white men were quartered, most of them officers commanding a handful of native soldiers. In the distance could be seen the native village surrounded by its teakwood stockade.

Hungerford had found just outside his own stockade a rude thatched shed, without walls, where the natives had gathered for worship with his predecessor. There were rows of rough benches; and at one end was a small platform upon which stood a melodeon. Here was to be the scene of his future activities.

This was the Mission of Rambunda to which the Reverend Chester Hungerford had fled from the irksome

2

formalism and stifling ecclesiastical atmosphere of England. He was now a changed man, and so perfect was the change, so complete in all ways, that it was clearly evident his old, artificial life at home had not been in harmony with his deeper and better self.

Yet the strangeness of this jungle world, as old as time, but new to him, did not altogether establish his peace of mind. It gave him a sense of freedom for self-expression, a chance to think alone unhandicapped by the demands of civilization; yet it also left him more contemplative and dubious as to the meaning of the Great Mystery of Life. Out here, away from the tangible edifices which housed it at home, his religion seemed unsatisfactory. It struck him as inadequate, almost petty. His science, too, was unsatisfactory, attempting to establish facts and limitations in a land where facts appeared irrelevant and no limitations seemed to exist. Slowly, surely, the old life was passing and a new was coming in.

The Reverend Chester Hungerford was walking quietly among the trees and ropelike vines near the Mission. His soul had awakened to a new appreciation of the wonderful and the beautiful. Everything from bird to flower seemed to have about it a sense of mystery and charm. For the first time in life he was one with nature—a living, breathing part of it. He felt a sense of reality of the unseen, a reassurance of

3

invisible things of the spirit. What better place could he find than here, to preach to the natives and to the occasionally attending officers of the Post!

Hungerford's presence in the little settlement was due to the maneuvers of Bishop Braithwaite, who had been his father's friend and his own ecclesiastical superior in England. Slowly he had been coming to the point where his future as a clergyman of the Church of England was imperilled by his views and methods. He was not as orthodox as one must be to live

placidly in his church and preach serenely the gospel of Henry VIII, especially in his conservative, custom-bound homeland. Repeatedly the Bishop had remonstrated with him. Hungerford was conscientious, perhaps too much so. It was this which had interfered with his ability to deliver complacently the comfortable platitudes which his well-bred, well-fed congregation had expected in Winfield.

Out here Hungerford was beyond the world's edge. At least it seemed so to him when, at the close of a tropical day, he saw the sun bid him good-bye and drop abruptly over the jungle's rim to other lands than Africa. It was a lonely place to be; Bishop Braithwaite had sent him there to get rid of him; and now Hungerford felt that it was he who had lost a burden.

4

His mind, in the past, had been profoundly influenced by both mysticism and science. It had been swinging between inclinations toward the dogmatic observance of the Thirty-nine Articles and a whirl of psychologic confusions, Mephistophelian in their frequent ability to snatch him from his carefully calculated Christian feet. He had hoped that missionary work in Africa would give him more freedom from the musty ritualism of the church, more opportunity to get down to the elements of Christianity. Then, too, his love of nature and his profound interest in the higher animals, especially the apes and their intellectual capacities, had been factors in his decision.

Now he would have a chance to study those anthropoid cousins of his whose family tree Darwin had traced for the humiliation of an indignant and egotistical world of men. Perhaps he might eventually be able to give some new light on the evolutionary theory that seems to trouble the world so seriously at present. Often before coming here he had thought that if he could be among the apes and observe them in their natural environment he might arrive at something more satisfactory than speculation, at least to himself. Secretly he had long speculated as to just how near the boundary line between the human and the animal world they approached. More than once he had dared ask himself the question, "Were the chimpanzees

5

not nearer to man than to the other ape species?" Their minds were dwarfed, Hungerford knew; but what were their potentialities? One considered the potentialities of the Hottentot, the height of whose

civilization thus far, was the ability to count two! Was it absurd to believe that the apes were very little lower in their mental development? He had recalled having seen at a London music hall a trained orang whose intelligence put to shame that of many of the natives of Africa.

Today was Hungerford's fourth Sunday at Rambunda. He arose early, dressed himself in his khaki clothes, and after a breakfast of toast and coffee went out to the Mission shed to amuse himself by playing a few old-fashioned hymns on the melodeon. He was holding no service today. The death of an aged chieftain, who was not among his converts, had drawn the natives in a large body to attend and participate in their own savage funeral rites. His influence with even the members of the Mission was not yet strong enough to hold them on such an occasion.

It was a perfect day, and Hungerford was glad of this opportunity to be entirely alone. Already the sun was peeping through the dense woodland forest. He closed the melodeon and stepped outside the Mission-shed. A shadow with huge wings darted across

6

his pathway. Glancing upward, he saw a great eagle sweeping in circles toward the clearing. He stood still, fascinated—and watched its approach. Tail extended, head down, beak open, wings raised high to exert lifting power at the moment of attack, it plunged downward into the tree tops. He heard a shrill cry. Then the eagle rose to view, rapidly flapping its wings as it struggled to lift the object caught. Hungerford shaded his eyes and beheld a small black ape.

Clutching its shrieking prey, the bird was slowly rising when there leaped from the tree top a white shape with its arms and legs extended—a white ape. One long arm shot out and clutched the eagle's neck. A mass of black and white twirled in the air, giving forth shrieks and screams. A savage thrust of the eagle's powerful beak and the white ape seemed to weaken its hold. But with its free forearm it caught at the bird and bent back its head. The eagle fell a short distance under the shock, then began to flap its wings more forcefully.

Slowly but surely it again raised itself and its struggling burdens toward the sky. The white ape seemed powerless to choke its enemy. Gradually the great pinions lifted all three higher and higher. Then one hand of the white ape loosed its hold, darted out, and with clawing fingers tore at the eagle's eyes. There

was a screech of agony from the air-pirate; and Hungerford, looking on spellbound, could see by the uneven beating of its wings and the dripping of blood from its gouged eyesockets that it was blinded.

Then ensued a battle of bird and animal wits, of creatures naturally fierce and crafty. The white ape strove to guide the eagle earthward, toward safety for the young one and itself. But the confused bird still seemed to know the direction in which its freedom lay.

Hungerford saw the white ape change its tactics. It shifted its weight from side to side, cunningly hampering in every possible way the chance of the wings to do effectual work, until finally the eagle was unwittingly forced to descend within ten feet of the ground in the clearing.

After a quick, calculating glance, the white ape again resorted to different methods. Still holding the bird's neck in a choking grip with one hand, it encircled the little black ape with the other arm, and using its feet wherever it could get a hold, leaned far over and sank its teeth into the fleshy portion of the eagle's leg. Sharp pain forced the eagle to loosen its talons, and in a moment the black ape fell free, held by its protector's arm. Instantly, the white ape released its throttling grasp on the bird, and with the rescued one

in its embrace, dropped to earth, alighting easily upon its hind feet not six yards from Hungerford. He watched the blind eagle, with bleeding, empty sockets, screaming and winging its way upward to the clouds; and then Hungerford transferred his gaze to the white ape near him and the smaller black ape in its arms. Tenderly the larger one examined the injuries of the smaller, and with caressing, maternal mutterings noted the ugly wounds where the cruel talons had gripped it.

The white ape paid no attention to Hungerford as it nursed and soothed its black companion. The Missionary noticed the latter was malformed, with shrunken, half-paralyzed lower limbs.

Presently another little black ape descended from the trees and ran to the larger ape, whimpering. But the latter was so busily engaged in an examination of the sufferer that it gave scant attention to the agitated chattering of the other.

The white ape now laid the afflicted one upon the ground and gazed at it with a gesture of uncertainty, which seemed to Hungerford ludicrously human in its eloquence. It appeared to be thinking over the whole affair.

Hungerford sat down on a fallen log near by wondering that an animal could act in so human a fashion.

9

At length, without seeming to notice him at all, the white ape arose with a new resolution in its bearing and, carefully carrying the crippled ape, with the other one following, abruptly departed. Long after they had disappeared into the jungle the Missionary sat still in thought, pondering, questioning, dreaming ... was he right? Had he not seen a creature show such *human* traits that the question was quite automatically suggested whether the animal had not acted with real *intelligence*? Or was he merely the victim of his own too fertile imagination?

10

CHAPTER II.

AN ARGUMENT

THAT evening Hungerford dined at the Post with an old friend of his father's, Colonel Trevor. He was telling of what had happened in the morning. "And you know, Colonel," he was saying, "the part of that air battle that stands out in my memory isn't so much the actual fighting ... though I assure you it was thrilling ... as the ... I really hesitate to put it into words ..."

"Well, ... go on, old man."

"Then ... this ... I mentioned, you know, how that white ape seemed to stand off and gaze at the injured black one ... It's rather hard to define, because what I got out of that look, that gesture, was almost too vague even to notice ... but I got it ... You know how much you get from people, things that can't be expressed by word or action ... they just come by spiritual means."

The Colonel, half frowning, made an elaborate gesture of dissent.

"Oh, of course, Colonel, I know—spiritual—rather

11

overdrawn, but nevertheless, there the ape stood and there it looked, uncertainty in its attitude, questioning, as if wondering whether the black one was worth saving or not. It was uncanny."

"Wondering?..."

"Yes—that is— ..." Hungerford became judicial in his reply. "Wondering—that is, questioning the practical aspects of the rescue."

The Colonel puffed at his cigar solemnly and quizzed Hungerford with his mocking, cynical eyes.

"Nothing I can explain...." Hungerford went on lamely.

"As a matter of fact," the Colonel suddenly offered, "the Blacks claim that these apes will always kill off their unfit—the lame, the halt, the blind, as it were."

Hungerford started. "What do you make of it?" he asked.

“Make of it?” the Colonel demanded. “There doesn’t seem anything *to* make of it.”

Hungerford was nonplussed, but persistent. “Why this ape saved a cripple is what gets me!” he continued.

“The Lord only knows!” replied the Colonel. “There are inconsistencies among them, I suppose, as well as among us humans....”

12

“I’ve never seen an *animal* express what that white ape did,” Hungerford told him.

“What do you mean, old man ... that it acted with *intelligence*?”

“Why ... intelligence ... rather a broad term, don’t you think?” was his reply to the Colonel.

“Well, then, what do *you* call it?”

“That’s just the point, Colonel. We’ve words to cover all the mental activities of the human mind....”

Colonel Trevor cut in, “Mental activity?”

“Why not...? We don’t know the limits of their mental range ...

“Of the animals?” the Colonel asked ironically.

“The *animals* ... they’ve got a brain, haven’t they?”

The Colonel shrugged. “Well ... does anyone understand it—just how it works—how far it can go?”

“For that matter, Colonel, does anyone know just how far a *human* brain can go?”

“No—er—not exactly.” The Colonel fumbled. “Fine—fine!” Hungerford felt a mental glow.

“You’re a great aid. If we can’t establish the limits of our own minds how can we even dimly see....”

“Old man, ... please ... it’s too uncanny ... just look over that stockade. There’re a thousand miles of

13

jungle, packed like sardines with animals—from apes down. No, don’t even mention it, I’ll have the D. T.’s.”

“Much over there we don’t know.” Hungerford nodded toward the forest.

“Yes—and—er.” Thoughtfully Colonel Trevor leaned back in his chair and half closed his eyes. “Tell me, do you believe that only apes have

minds, or do you suggest that *all* animals may behave with intelligence and insight under conditions that require such behavior?”

“Certainly, if any, all. But the apes seem to have gone several steps farther in their development than any of the others. In fact they are so close to man that physicians now study certain diseases among them in their efforts to find cures for the human race. And we even steal their glands! I’d rather, in my attempt to ascertain the degree of relationship between animals and man, confine my investigation to them. It is easier to get results from the graduating class than from children in the kindergarten.”

“Hum-m-m! It all seems a bit thick.” And the Colonel took his half-smoked cigar and whirled it into the grass, as he gave Hungerford a keen look.

Hungerford watched the lighted butt fly through the darkness and felt that his vague efforts at conviction

14

had gone with it. He had found no satisfactory answer. Out there in the clearing by himself, he had been all but persuaded that he had had a “sign.” Here in the presence of his unsympathetic compatriot he was less sure. Only on one point was he decided—that he would continue to seek.

15

CHAPTER III.

THE SEEKERS MEET

HUNGERFORD rejoiced in his solitude. The forest gave him much more happiness than he could find at the Post, where most of the residents preferred to herd with their kind, and set up as convincing a little imitation of civilization as possible. He had schooled himself against the appalling loneliness and horror that comes to the average cultured man when he realizes that he is cut off from human society and the life of culture. One false step under such conditions and the average man goes to pieces; but Hungerford was schooled in science and nature, and able to prevent destructive thoughts from sweeping him off his feet. He had long observed that civilized people give too little regard to the training that a man needs in primitive conditions. No pall of depression would ever come upon him in this wild paradise as it is claimed to come upon all civilized white men who remain here long enough.

He laughed to himself when he remembered what one of his aged parishioners in London had told him about the tropics. Evidently she had gleaned all her ideas from "Paul and Virginia," for she believed that

16

the sun was always shining, and that the sky was always blue as indigo; that the earth offered up perpetual incense, perfuming the air, and that the harsh necessities of life were unknown, especially in Africa. And that the amiable savages came daily with gifts of fruit and other sacrificial offerings to their beloved minister, hoping that he might convert them.

But already he had fully realized that he was in the rainy zone, where clouds come often, swept by the black winds from the ocean; and that the dark river just beyond in the jungle was always darkened by mud, and filled with masses of putrid vegetation. Here, battles untold in numbers, were ever raging, one form of life preying upon another, ever the survival of the fittest. Over him flew a huge red butterfly with torn and tattered wings. Last night he saw a misty fog, and far beyond a misty moon and oceans of misty stars.

But these were the exceptions. Most of the days and nights were fair beyond description. And often he would lie in his hammock, gazing at the myriads of leafy forms with all the tints of the rainbow, beyond which he could glimpse a wondrous cloudland. But the lack of an extended view, the absence of a horizon, at times made him feel that he was a happy prisoner, caught within the green confines. Here he felt that he could dream away the rest of his life,

17

rejoicing in newly awakened emotions in his soul which had long been dormant under the urban conditions of his life and now brought forth by nature.

His thoughts at times would go back to England; but there were no regrets for having come back out to Africa, unless it was a vague one that he had had to bid adieu to Bishop Braithwaite's niece, the Lady Cornelia Mowbray, and his half-hearted wooing. He thought that he was really beginning to care for her a little, but he was not sure.

Now he recalled how they had been friends from childhood, and how in later years he had self-consciously played a bit at courtship. Just how she had taken his pleasant attentions was known only to her; for her farewell had been too beautifully British to give him any hint of how much, or little, his departure had meant to her. Warm friends they were, assuredly, and it was as such, with a comradely pressure of the hand, that she had bidden him good-bye.

"I think it's awfully jolly, your going out to Africa," she told him. "It's a part of the world that I thrill to think about. I don't know why. 'The call of the wild,' I dare say, and that sort of thing ...

The Lady Cornelia's younger sister had lately become the wife of Captain the Honorable Arthur Norton, the youngest son of the Earl of Ludlow; and where he would next be stationed was causing his

18

bride, the England-loving Lady Evelyn, some apprehension. The War Office had been throwing out dark hints about sending him to Egypt when his leave was up.

Hungerford was reading over parts of Lady Cornelia's letter. "If Arthur and Evelyn do get sent out there, I may take it into my head to visit them one of these days. You don't think we might run across one another, if I

were in Cairo and you in Tanaland! ...” It reminded him that he had written to her only once since leaving England, except the postcard he had sent from Mombasa upon landing. He determined to do better in the future. He was almost in England when a rustling sound just above him in the foliage made him start and glance upward. There, where a pale gleam of sunlight fell through the leaves, he saw two small red parrots fighting over a banana. And suddenly he was back in the great African jungle.

The afternoon following the battle in the air, while Hungerford was reading on the porch, Rimpano made an unceremonious entry, babbling half incoherently from his high state of excitement.

“Um-um apes by spring! Heap hurry come!”

The missionary, putting down his book, hastily followed his servant to the spring at the edge of the clearing outside the stockade. There in the rich black

19

loam were a number of ape tracks, apparently quite fresh. Then he saw the white ape, half-hidden by the vines and bending over something. He slackened his pace, and drawing nearer, perceived that she was plucking the red fruit of the batuna, which oddly grows close to the ground near the root of the plant, and feeding it to the little crippled ape, who lay a few feet from the spring, apparently too spent to move. The blood-clotted gashes which the eagle had made in his side were still seriously evident. The other black ape, too, was close at hand, busily feeding himself.

Rimpano, who was just behind Hungerford, whispered, “Ape folk what come to get water; big long way to other spring, and river water too hot for to drink.... Us know ’em, call ’um Hilda and her brothers, Rantong and Noonan.”

Rimpano was a “find.” He was pre-eminently a citizen of the forest and knew more about apes than anyone of the natives in that part of Africa. He was an oldish young man, black as ebony, short, thickset, with a pock-marked face, eyes like a mouse and with fringy eyebrows; and he had protruding ears that tended to stand up like a donkey’s when he was excited. His shoulders were slim and drooping, but his head was always held erect, with a huge mouth slightly open showing two prominent, tusklike teeth in a set prognathous jaw. This gave him almost an

20

owlish appearance. He had a deep graphophone voice and when he spoke the sound was like the creaking of a barn door on rusty hinges. When amused he emitted a sound between a half-cackle and a screech.

There were several interpretations of Rimpano. One was that he was a “come back.” That is, that he had gone to the Celestial Gates and that Peter or the porter at the other gate had sent him back to perform some unfulfilled task. Another one was that he was an ape in disguise who was acting as a human servant to lobby with the missionary for his own people—the apes. A third and most popular one was that he was a kind of black Messiah, who would establish an earthly paradise for the Blacks, where they would have undisputed rulership over all the land. This latter belief made him very popular with all the natives. The only thing against him was his terrible homeliness which caused the children of the village to become frightened at him.

Yet, his homeliness did not prevent him from being invaluable to Hungerford, who could never have hoped, when he came to Africa, to have secured a servant who knew so much about the ape folk. Aside from the black man’s affectionate interest in them, he had at one time been for five years in the service of the late Professor Garner, whose life was spent in studying the customs and language of all the simian

21

tribes. Providence had brought the missionary and the native together.

The latter declared that the white ape, Hilda, could never take her brother in his present condition back to their jungle home. To reach it they would probably have to travel a considerable distance and stop often on the way. All too likely would be the chance of attack upon the invalid from any one of numerous enemies. The leopards, or one of the pitiless pythons which could coil its thirty feet of cold, slimy length around a stag and crush its bones to a pulp, would make short work of Rantong.

When Rimpano spoke, Hilda stopped picking the berries and looked up. Timorously Noonan darted into the thicket, but she did not follow him. She crouched uncertainly at Rantong’s side, one arm extended over him in a shielding gesture, and as Hungerford again looked into her intelligent face, he fancied that he could read worry in her anxious gaze. He was sure that her wounded brother’s care had become a responsibility which she no longer knew how to meet.

“What can we do, Rimpano? If we leave the poor creature here, something will get him in the night. And it’s plain that she’s not going to abandon him. All three of them will be the prey of some wild things before morning if they stay here.”

22

“Take home,” Rimpano directed earnestly. “Us take sick one home, she follow then.”

“Why, you know she’d never let us touch him,” scoffed Hungerford.

“Uh-huh,” insisted the other. “Them no make fight—she want help. See, she no run, no scrap, all time us stand here and make talk.”

Without waiting for an answer, Rimpano went quickly but quietly forward, and stooping, lithely lifted the wounded one in his arms. As he had predicted, Hilda made no protest. She only drew back with the look of an appealing dog, a look that seemed to say, “I’ve got to trust you,” while she anxiously eyed the African.

As Rimpano carried Rantong to the stockade, Noonan once more crept out from hiding. Hungerford, while he followed his servant to the house, casting glances over his shoulder at the two remaining apes, saw Noonan clutching questioningly at Hilda’s arm. Her gesture seemed to reassure him, and he was pacified when she comfortingly held his hand. They waited until the men had put some distance between them, then cautiously, hand in hand, began to follow.

Rimpano put the ape upon the screened porch where the insects could not get at him. Then the man

23

brought some of the long gray moss which festooned a nearby tree, and made the invalid a bed in the porch corner. Hungerford now joined him in the task, an interested if not expert helper; and these operations Hilda and Noonan watched from a distance. The gateway of the stockade was as far as their temerity carried them. When they were satisfied beyond a doubt that their brother was in safe hands, they noiselessly withdrew.

24

CHAPTER IV.

A NIGHT STORM

RANTONG slept until evening. He awoke while Hungerford was having supper at a small table on the front porch, and readily accepted a banana that was offered him. But he was quite weak, and seemed scarcely to have the strength to peel it.

Directly after dark a heavy wind arose, presaging one of the sudden, severe storms of the tropics.

While Rimpano was lowering the canvas porch-curtains, Hungerford heard a low whining outside, and then, as a flash of vivid lightning zigzagged sharply earthward, illuminating the darkness for a fleeting second, he descried Hilda peering in through the screen, and the dusky little face of Noonan, hardly distinguishable, close to hers.

Hungerford wondered how they had gotten into the stockade, for Rimpano had closed the gate as usual just before nightfall. The wall was surely too high for them to have climbed over it, and the shack had been erected so far away from the trees at the clearing's edge that it was impossible for any animal to drop from the branches into the stockade. Only an

25

isolated tamarind had been left for shade within the enclosure. Then he decided that they must have entered the gate before it had been shut, and probably hidden behind the house.

He was sure that the two apes were begging admittance. Fear of the storm and fatigue, as well as Rantong's presence, made them ready to accept human hospitality. He swung wide the screen door as another flash, which lit up the scene, preceded the beginning of the rain. The water came splashing down in pelting sheets, and Hilda, dragging the reluctant Noonan by the hand, darted fearfully onto the porch.

They made for the bed in the corner where Rantong lay, and when Hungerford had closed the screen again, Rimpano fastened the last canvas curtain.

Hilda and Noonan lay down beside Rantong. Rimpano arranged a waterproof pack-cover in the corner around them to shut out the rain beating in beneath the curtains. They shrank back nervously. His actions reassured them.

The storm continued throughout most of the night. Trees lashed each other furiously. The thunder boomed and howled; sometimes it rolled in every direction, as if a thousand bombs had been set off simultaneously; again it gave forth sharp cracking reports, like rifles in target practice. The wind shrieked through the bending, swaying, tortured trees,

26

like lost spirits, and the thud of falling palms and breaking branches added to the pandemoniac effect. No sound was heard in all the jungle save the din of the storm. Every bird and beast had sought a place of refuge.

The lightning continued; it was white, yellow, red and blue, with an occasional sheet of dazzling brilliance. Hungerford heard a crash on the stockade wall and went to the door and looked out. A large branch of the tamarind tree had fallen across the gate. As he looked he saw an animal, apparently a huge bat, fly from the tamarind tree to the wall. It was a flying fox.

Hungerford returned to his bed and listened to the storm; Rimpano, a fair-weather Christian, had abandoned his hut for the more secure shelter of the larger dwelling. He was praying to his gods, whom he still preferred to trust in times of real peril, to protect him from annihilation. But the three apes, apparently feeling that they had consigned themselves to guardians who could protect them even from the elements, slept as peacefully as tired children.

27

CHAPTER V.

HILDA'S SORROW

Part I

FINALLY the storm abated and Hungerford fell asleep. He dreamed of visiting a circus where there were many wild animals, and did not wake until daylight. Coming out upon the porch, bright with sunshine, which seemed to belie the late fury of the tempest and prove it a bad dream of the night, he whiffed the appetizing odor of fresh coffee. Rimpano had already raised the porch curtains and opened the stockade gate. Hungerford could see the noisy parrots splashing at the river's edge, taking their daily baths amidst great exchange of avian gossip. The sun had not yet dried the rain drops which, falling from the trees, struck the big leaves of the begonias below them with a sharp, popping sound.

"Glorious morning," shouted Hungerford joyously, "and God's surely in His heaven today; eh, Rimpano?" was his playful greeting as the man came in from the cook-shed bearing the breakfast tray.

"Maybe him go back to heaven this morning," conceded

28

Rimpano hopefully, "but him certainly off on holiday las' night, when Debil rule him roost for him.... Breakfas' ready now, and apes want some too."

It was only then that Hungerford remembered the apes. He found Rantong still lying on his bed in the porch corner, half hidden under the moss, and looking more shrunken and gnome-like than ever.

A moment later Hungerford spied the other two outside, sitting near the door of the cook-shed. They were watching the porch with hungry eyes glued anxiously upon the table. Rimpano told him that they had run out to watch the preparation for breakfast. Timidity probably restrained them from returning to the porch, or possibly it was only a wish on Hilda's part to wait until she had been invited.

Neither she nor Noonan showed much hesitancy in accepting the invitation when it had been proffered. Both feasted heartily on the fruit and muffins given them, but Rantong drooped in his chair and was able only to drink a little warm goat's milk—he was sick.

Hilda offered her brother choice morsels of her own repast, with coaxing sounds and gestures, which Hungerford could read almost as plainly as English. Noonan, too, displayed his sympathy, patting Rantong gently and whispering fraternal secrets into his ear.

The beauty of the new day, fresh and cooler after the rain, sent Hungerford's spirits soaring. He welcomed

29

morning here. Even those features of his work which were rather far removed from the idealistic were cheerfully met.

Notwithstanding the fact that he was quite unversed in the ways of the hunter, the camper, the outdoor man, he seemed to belong to this life of primitive simplicity, to come nearer to being himself away from formal environments. He was very glad this morning that he had left the civilized world behind for a time—perhaps for years—if he continued to feel the call here as strongly as he felt it now.

He was reminded of something the naturalist Burroughs once said, to the effect that the love of nature has a high religious value, and has made many lives sweet and placid; that there are no heretics in Nature's Church; all are believers, all are communicants. Here he felt this more and more. Here he felt closer to God.

Back home it had seemed to him that the religion of most of his church members meant nothing more than an observance of certain rules which they hoped would guarantee their expectations of a luxurious home after death. He had no desire to be cynical. He only loved and pitied those whose hope of profit and fear of punishment were the only considerations which kept them moral. The world's perverted interpretations of the doctrines of the selfless Christ

30

bore down upon his heart, causing a sharp pain to pass through it, leaving a prayer for greater freedom from formalism.

He realized that a proper-minded pastor should have—and would have—no such uncomfortable misgivings; and at such times he was harassed

with the question: was he altogether a misfit in the church? There was so much in its teachings that he could not accept. He had more faith in Huxley's religion than in that of the bishop who decried him, in Bruno's than in that of the church which burnt him at the stake.

Hungerford was not a man to value the science of liturgical tradition very much. The essence of all science is progression. The problems and needs of these Africans were by no means the same as those in England, and were certainly not mediaeval problems. Science had taught Hungerford that nature is a part of the mind of God, and not something for man to battle against. It had also taught him that probably man had never fallen from grace into sin, but is slowly going upward from darkness into light. And that only fools think everything was created for the use and enjoyment of man. What of the immense tracts of land where for ages a tremendous pageant of life has been going on without one reference to man? Hungerford knew that the old ideas of dark and

31

haunting sins had driven men to the desert, where asceticism could be practiced, but that now men turn their minds more to amendment than repentance. In brief—that this was not the time to follow the teachings of mediaeval minds. But rather a very simple, practical teaching of right living here and now. Already the natives believed that God demanded great public recognition, feeling great pleasure in loud praises given in concert, with extravagantly phrased ascriptions of power and honour.

His sermons should be brief and ethical, suited to the half savage, half animal-like natives who believed him. Such thoughts alone made him believe he had a definite work to do among the savages.

Part II

After breakfast both men examined the failing ape. He was feverish, and Hungerford took his temperature. To this he submitted, attempting to bite the thermometer in two, as a dog of Hungerford's had once done under similar circumstances.

The fever proved to be high, but the missionary was unable to decide, from the depths of his ignorance of the subject, to what extent the rules regarding a human patient would apply to the ape. Perhaps there was still a

chance for the invalid. Hungerford tried such simple treatment as his supplies and slight

32

knowledge of doctoring permitted, but he could do little.

Midday approached. The heat grew more intense. It was evident that Rantong was sinking. But in the afternoon he fell asleep, and Hungerford hoped that the rest would benefit him and that nature might, perhaps, by her own wholesome methods, take his recovery in hand. The ape was not sleeping easily, but giving distressed cries and occasional moans as if suffering or having troubled dreams—dreams perhaps of the terrible eagle. The other two apes watched over him with evident solicitude all day. They now accepted the two men as proven friends, and when either of them had occasion to approach or handle the patient, Hilda and Noonan would look on with pathetic confidence, making reassuring sounds to their brother.

But despite all that was done for him poor Rantong found the battle too hard to fight. His injuries were too severe and his little body, frail and crippled, had not the reserve strength for the task of rebuilding. Near the end of the long, hot day he again dropped to sleep. At dusk Rimpano brought him some bread and milk for supper. Dropping the tray to the floor with a bang, he shrieked loudly, “Uh! him dead!”

Hilda’s grief was unmistakably deep. It reminded

33

Hungerford of the grief he once saw a dog express for her dead puppy. She stood near the lifeless body and gazed at it with a wistful look, placed her hand very tenderly on its little forehead, then uttered a faint sobbing sound, but no further demonstration was made. She occupied herself trying to comfort Noonan, who at the first realization of the loss seemed the more crushed and overwhelmed of the two.

When Rimpano took up the body to carry it out for burial, Hungerford’s throat filled at the stricken look in the white ape’s eyes. But she made no outcry. As she looked into the face of the missionary, her expression seemed to say, “I know you tried to save him. This is all very strange; I do not understand. But I trust you to do the best you can for us.”

34

CHAPTER VI.

A MIND UNFOLDS

AS THE DAYS and weeks went by, Hilda had so definitely taken her place in Hungerford's home that he now found it difficult to think of the place without her.

Noonan had followed his twin brother. After Rantong had died, he gradually pined away. Refusing to eat or play, he had become so gaunt and weak that Rimpano thought it best to put him out of his misery.

Hungerford had found it difficult to bring himself to agree to this, and had tried his best to induce the ape to eat and take a renewed interest in life. But in vain. So, at last, when it had become certain that Noonan was slowly dying, he had been forced to a reluctant admission that to chloroform the twin would be the most merciful thing under the circumstances.

At first it had seemed to Hungerford, judging from what he had seen on the surface, that Noonan's grief was greater than Hilda's. He had wondered at this and thought that it was because the two had always played together; but later he saw that he

35

was wrong in supposing Noonan's grief to be the greater. For Noonan's reaction to the death of Rantong was an instinctive, material sense of deprivation not unlike his sense of hunger when deprived of food, or of pain when his body was hurt.

Hilda's love and grief for Rantong were, on the other hand, the result of both emotional and mental processes. At least it seemed so to Hungerford. Instinct was there, perhaps; but there was also the thought and feeling which had enabled her to care for Rantong in spite of his physical limitations. This same thought and feeling had made it possible for her to reconcile herself to his death, to see its compensating side and meet it with resignation.

Hungerford noted that little by little the white ape adjusted herself to the loss of her brothers, and began to center her interest in him with a dog-like affection that was very evident. Of Rimpano, too, she seemed very fond,

but it was a liking born of gratitude for what he had done for her, and especially for Rantong, when they came to the clearing. She made it plain in innumerable ways that there was a very different quality in her regard for the two men. Rimpano was a good friend, but she treated him quite as an equal; whereas, Hungerford was a being to whom she looked up with an awed devotion. The missionary had become much interested in her mental

36

development, and as attached to her as he had once been to a favorite bird dog. Her love of play, her childish curiosity, her constant mental groping toward the understanding of new things, held his attention. He did not try to train her, in the ordinary sense, and she did only what she had learned from her own people or what she saw those around her do.

Hungerford gave her a set of large block letters, which became her choice playthings. She seemed to delight in handling them; and soon Rimpano conceived the idea of teaching her to spell out her name, as he had seen Hungerford teach the natives. This was a task which required many weeks and much patience; but finally he succeeded in teaching her. At first she was inclined to use an "E" for an "I" and vice versa; but when once she had learned to make the word "Hilda" correctly, she rarely made a mistake. Once, just to tease her, Rimpano hid the letter "I" and she tried to spell out her name without it, first using "E" for "I". Then suddenly growing contemptuous, she hurled all her blocks off the small wooden table where she was playing and refused to pick them up until Rimpano had returned the "I."

Her strange desire to imitate sounds and constantly to produce new ones was ever a puzzle to Hungerford. Some of them were so strange and weird that he believed they were perhaps a part of her tribal

37

language, for she would pleadingly repeat certain sounds over and over again as if she were trying to tell him something. Her natural voice seemed to lend itself to the sound of "E," and it did not require long for her to say it very distinctly. So far she knew only three letters of the alphabet, "E," "I," and "A;" she not only could say them, but she could pick them out with ease from among the wooden blocks. In some respects she was not as difficult to teach as the average native child.

This constant effort on Hilda's part to imitate all new sounds and sound combinations was one of her chief pastimes. One day while she was playfully trying to fit Rimpano's new tin dishpan on her head she let it slip and fall to the floor, making a ringing noise. This noise seemed to please her very much; and she continued picking the pan up and hurling it to the floor until Rimpano heard the noise, rushed into the kitchen and, wildly gesticulating, shouted, "Hilda, what matter with you? Who told you beat my pan?" Hilda scampered away, with an apish grin on her face, mindful only of the new sounds she could make.

Often she played at the edge of the clearing, climbing up among the trees and swinging on the wild grapevine swings, but she never went farther away,

38

unless it was sometimes to accompany Hungerford on his walks.

In the evening before retiring she generally performed acrobatic feats for the amusement of Hungerford and Rimpano. One day after she had watched a flock of young goats jumping off and on the trunk of a large fallen tree in the clearing, she sprang onto the shed and began turning handsprings and somersaults with delight.

When danger seemed near, she was more dependable than a watchdog. If a wild animal came near the stockade, either by day or by night, she always seemed to become aware of its hostile presence, possibly by some sixth sense, and sounded an alarm.

She exhibited strongly the tendency to investigate everything, Hungerford's watch being one of the first things that interested her. But, unlike the average child, she could be trusted to handle it without injury. She would hold it close to her ear, listening intently to the ticking for some seconds, and then perplexedly examine the edge as she turned it round and round. She appeared to be searching for something alive inside of it, which might be the cause of the ticking.

One day, to Hungerford's astonishment, Hilda pointed to the case with a triumphant expression which sounded like, "Ug-g!" Then he recognized it as her evident attempt to say bug. She fancied that

39

there was a beetle of some sort in the watch producing the sound, and had done her best to give expression to a word she had often heard the

missionary and his servant use in this insect-infested land. To Hungerford it opened up in a flash, the thrilling and stupendous possibilities of teaching her to talk!

When she did anything to call forth his disapproval, her remorse was extreme. But this did not often happen. Only once had she lapsed seriously from the straight and narrow path since coming to the shack, and that was when one of the native converts sent Hungerford a large calabash full of date-wine as a gift. This happened on an occasion when he was away from home. Unthinkingly, Rimpano left the wine where Hilda could pursue her investigations and repaired to the cook-shed. When the missionary returned home, he found Hilda sitting upon the roof of his house in a disgraceful intoxicated condition, jabbering abuse at Rimpano, who was standing below returning the compliment. The calabash had been emptied and the house was in a topsy-turvy condition as a result of her potations. Hilda was on a spree!

“That’s quite ugly of you, Hilda!” Hungerford added to the scoldings of Rimpano. She climbed down from her refuge in a state of complete humiliation.

40

Wishing to teach her a lesson, Hungerford ignored her during the rest of the day as he would have done to a disobedient dog. Hilda kept herself out of his sight, and just before Rimpano closed the stockade for the night, she slipped out and disappeared. Hungerford did not miss her until bedtime. When it became evident that she was nowhere about the shack, he opened the gate and called her repeatedly. But she did not come. Rimpano, who was both sleepy and disgruntled, insisted that they should retire and let her go. “She come back when she get good ready,” he mumbled half to himself. But Hungerford was as worried as if a child in his care had run off into the forest at night. However, when Rimpano pointed out how well Hilda was able to take care of herself in her natural home, the missionary was obliged to laugh at his own concern.

“Hilda come home in the morning, when she’m get hungry,” Rimpano assured him. When the next day brought no Hilda, Hungerford was amazed to realize how much her presence had come to mean to him. He had grieved over the loss of pets at home, but this was as distressing to him as if a human friend had gone out of his house, perhaps never to return. He spent

most of the day searching and calling her in the woods around the clearing, hoping that she would be close by.

41

That night he awoke from a restless dream with a feeling that some danger was near, and, reaching under the pillow for his flash light, found that a venomous puff adder had somehow gotten into the house and was crawling on the floor near his cot. He managed to rout the snake without summoning Rimpano. Then he thought again of Hilda, and he reflected that had she been there the reptile would never have gotten in undiscovered. Thus Hilda would play her part well.

She remained away for three days. But on the fourth morning, just at daybreak, he heard her crying and scratching at the stockade gate. Eagerly he arose and went to let her in. When he opened the gate she hesitated humbly, doubtful of her reception. Her meekness continued for several days, and there was no mistaking her gladness when she was sure of his forgiveness.

42

CHAPTER VII.

HILDA'S RAPID PROGRESS

NOW began a new phase in Hilda's mental development, for her paramount problems, those of finding food and protecting herself from her enemies of the forest, had been solved. And it is no less true of animals than of mankind that necessity is the mother of invention. Hilda's problems at her home in the forest had been many and complex, yet she had been able to meet them.

Since her return to the hut she had no longer spent the days in play, but seemed anxious to try to find ways in which she might make herself of some use in the house. It was as if she had made a solemn resolve during her self-imposed exile that if she were taken back she would atone by creating for herself a place in Hungerford's home that should justify her being there. An intense desire to please animated her every act. She made herself a help about the cook-shed by bringing water, assisting in washing the dishes and paring potatoes. Her natural gift of mimicry soon enabled her to start a fire, and even to lift hot dishes from the stove.

Hilda's desire to do things was very strong; often

43

when Rimpano was preparing a meal she would run into the kitchen and childishly cry, "Ep! Ep!" in her eager attempt to say *help*. But her awkwardness in washing the dishes, especially in soapy water, caused Rimpano to forbid her this pleasure, for her little hands would invariably drop them.

Once, just before Hungerford's luncheon was ready to be carried to him, Rimpano left Hilda alone in the cook-shed and went to the spring for water. The moment he had gone, Hilda hastily piled the bread and butter and cups on the tray, and, anxious to show off before Hungerford, attempted to carry the tray to the table. She had gone but a few steps when she upset the teapot, scalding her hand badly. With a scream of terror she dropped the tray. Hungerford rushed to see what was the matter. There stood the bewildered Hilda, whimpering with pain and jabbering to herself in her ape

language, as she pathetically sucked her burned fingers. The tray with its smashed contents lay at her feet.

“Well, well, that’s too bad, Hilda! Now, now, don’t cry,” and he patted her affectionately on the head. “Come with me and I’ll bandage your hand.”

Sniffing like a frightened and injured child, glad not to be scolded, she followed him to the little medicine chest in the corner of his hut. There her injuries were soon dressed with salve and a neat linen cloth.

44

With one of his old handkerchiefs Hungerford made a sling for her arm. Rimpano returned just as Hungerford had finished, and, seeing the broken dishes, rushed to the door, wildly shouting:

“Hilda, you’m no help me no more. Me not teach you’m wash dishes and wear apron, like me. Why you’m break all my dishes up?”

But Hilda only rubbed her eyes and made no attempt to explain why she had acted as she had. Seeing her hopeless dejection, Hungerford spoke up:

“Don’t be too hard on her, Rimpano. She was trying to serve my dinner and scalded her hand. She’ll be more careful the next time.”

“H-huh! She no mind me when I tell her heap burn! Now, she know! Ah-hah, Hilda, now you’m no more help dish wash!” And grinning, as though amused at her accident, he went to the cook-shed to prepare another luncheon for Hungerford.

After luncheon Hilda repaired to the leafy shade of the tamarind tree. There she climbed into Rimpano’s hammock. Hungerford was seated nearby in his favorite rustic chair, reading a book, and incidentally wondering what was going on in Hilda’s mind. She was truly wounded at Rimpano’s anger, and no doubt grieved at the thought of not being permitted to do the things in the cook-shed she so loved

45

to do. Hungerford noticed that she blinked and blinked, and finally a deep sigh told him that she was asleep. She had been asleep for some time when all at once she began to cry, “Me, ’ep! Me ’ep! Me ’ep!”

Hungerford faced her in amusement, as she opened her sleepy eyes, evidently awakened by her own voice. He knew that she had been dreaming of the kitchen tragedies. She turned over and was soon asleep again.

In her learning to speak she began to show much progress. She learned to pronounce a number of words with sufficient distinctness to make them intelligible even to strangers. Perceiving that Hungerford spent much of his time with his books, she began to manifest an interest in these, especially several with brightly colored illustrations which he had brought to interest the native children.

Once when she was by herself, looking at the pictures in a child's story book, she came upon one of a monkey breaking up the dishes at a doll's tea-party. She did not quite understand the picture, but it was plain that the monkey was doing something which it ought not to do, and indignantly she slapped it with such force that she tore the leaf out of the book. This puzzled and annoyed her. She looked first at the rumpled picture upon the floor and then at the torn place where it had been, and slowly what had happened seemed to dawn in her mind. Picking it up, she

46

smoothed it out as best she could and carefully laid it back in the book.

Her personal likes and dislikes were strong, and generally were unerringly bestowed upon the just and the unjust according to their deserts. Hungerford was learning to put considerable trust in her judgments.

On one occasion the missionary made some purchases at the Post and sent one of the villagers home with them. As the native was leaving, after the delivery of the supplies, the observant Hilda, whose sharp eyes had missed nothing, rushed at him, and, pulling aside the cover on his basket, revealed Rimpano's best butcher knife, which the man had stolen while the other's back was turned.

Hilda's consciousness of her new importance in the household was most amusing to Hungerford. When he sometimes had a chance to observe her attitude toward other animals, he found her exhibiting all the superiority of a *nouveau riche* condescending to impress the proletariat. When Lieutenant Telford called on Hungerford, accompanied by his dog, a fine pointer, Hilda patted the dog on the head with the casual good will which might have been expected from the host of the house, but took no more personal notice of the dog.

One day when a band of little velvet monkeys took

47

up an inquisitive stand outside the stockade, Hilda went out and, addressing herself with simian emphasis to the leader, dismissed them for all the world as a well-bred matron might have ordered an unruly band of boys off her premises. They departed at once, evidently completely squelched; whereupon Hilda's satisfied air of having capably handled an annoying situation so tickled Hungerford and Rimpano, who had been witnesses to the incident, that they could scarcely restrain their laughter, which they knew would have offended her new dignity.

One morning, not long after this, Hungerford found her suffering from a toothache. Putting a few drops of laudanum on a piece of cotton, he placed it in the cavity. She soon felt a temporary relief, and showed her gratitude as a child might have done, and for a while she sat in the chair contentedly.

But the tooth proved to be ulcerated and a case for a dentist, as the pain soon returned increasingly. So he took her to the army dentist at the Post, who at first was inclined to balk at such a patient. However, when he saw how gentle she was, he agreed to undertake the tooth's treatment, and had as a result almost the entire population present to witness the operation. Hilda conducted herself with more stoicism in the dental chair than many of her human sisters. But even she squirmed and whined as the dentist

48

worked with her tooth, but evidently this was more fright than pain. Her eyes were riveted upon the instruments he used, and occasionally they would wander about the office, but they frequently returned to Hungerford, as if she felt that he would prevent the dentist from hurting her. When the tooth was finally removed she uttered one little shriek, then putting both her hands to her face, she placed a finger where the tooth had been.

As time went on, Hungerford saw more and more that Hilda was above the average of her species. He was not sure she belonged altogether to the chimpanzee group. But whatever her exact family tree, she was without doubt a genius of her tribe who had already done much more than most of her kind to span the gulf between man and ape. This would cause the great ape tribe to be protected and saved from annihilation because of Hungerford's interest. And he would have been of untold benefit to the world because of this!

Again he felt a terrible reaction toward his unappreciated efforts in this line. He had actually done nothing, absolutely nothing, and at length he felt that his fate was mediocrity here as it had been in the church; that all his

efforts toward educating and experimenting with Hilda were doomed to a trifling and ephemeral existence. Doubtless she would some

49

day run away to the forest to be with her own people, and that would be the end of all his work with her. He remembered now the old German advice that says, "Keep true to the dreams of thy youth!" But it is difficult to discover that they may never be anything but dreams. Ah, strange, marvelous youth, flaming times of romance and imagination; of self-reliance and colossal conceit, when the burning mind casts mammoth shadows which grow smaller and smaller as the years roll by, and finally with the approach of old age disappear entirely.

50

CHAPTER VIII.

A DISAGREEMENT

FIVE months had passed since Hilda's return to Hungerford's home. Often her people had come near the house, according to Rimpano's reports, but she had never left Hungerford since her return, and seemed to have no wish to leave. He wondered if she had settled down in his establishment for life. Did she never feel now the call of her old and natural life? Had she no more desire to see her own people?

Then came the thought, who *were* her people? Were there others like her in her tribe, or was she different both physically and mentally? Even Rimpano could not answer these questions. Hungerford knew that no one had ever seen a white ape before; that even her brothers were unlike her. Some day, he felt, he must try to find out something of her origin and former jungle associates.

One afternoon Colonel Trevor dropped in for tea. He had seen Hilda several times, including her visit to the dentist's. He knew something of her cleverness. But he was not prepared to find her wearing an apron, which Rimpano had tied around her waist,

51

and pouring the tea with very creditable, if somewhat awkward, table manners.

He gaped with astonishment as she painstakingly filled and considerably pushed the sugar basin across the table to him. Staring from her to the missionary, and then back to her again, he finally blurted out:

"I say, Hungerford, what strange creature is this you've got here? Is she an animal, or super-animal or what?" His tone was half resentful.

Hilda stood by the table, clutching the cream jug. As he spoke, her eyes were fixed upon him gravely. Then they roved to Hungerford's face, and rested there.

"That's just what I'm trying to find out." The answer came slowly, after a moment's hesitation. "I haven't made up my mind yet. But I've an idea

that she—that many like her, perhaps less advanced mentally—are geniuses of their kind. Just as Rimpano, while in reality a Hottentot, has a mind as far above that of the average Hottentot as is Hilda's mind above that of the average ape. In other words, she's a super-ape. And more nearly *human* than many of the natives who come to hear me preach. They are possessed of love, hate, joy, revenge, and of grief, courage, pain, want and satisfaction; and all things that go to make up man's life is found in them. And

52

again I say that this Hilda is mentally far above many of the black people here."

"But, I say! You're spoofing, aren't you? How dare you use the word *human* when speaking of an animal!"

"Well," Hungerford hesitated again, at a loss how to phrase his induction, especially to this thoroughly conventionally minded officer, "you're physiologically speaking an *animal*, aren't you? And yet you are human. No scientist or even intelligent layman has ever disputed that man is both." Hungerford was a bit irritated.

Colonel Trevor resented the imputation. His face took on the shade of a weathered brick. "Really, my dear Hungerford ... you express yourself rather offensively, I must say ... !"

"I meant no offense, Colonel, I assure you. Pardon me for speaking as frankly as I did. I don't think you understand me. I meant only that man is an animal. I include myself—all of my fellows—quite as much as you. If man isn't an animal, what is he? He isn't an angel, or a god!"

"Oh, in *that* sense ..." murmured the Colonel, mollified. "Still, when you come to analyze it, that generalization really means nothing, does it? For, of course, we're not animals."

53

"For purposes of classification, we all certainly belong to the animal kingdom, not the vegetable, and yet count ourselves human beings. Why may not the apes be both also? Do you see what I mean? How draw the line? Just what constitutes humanity? Merciful, affectionate, kindly instincts and conduct toward others—humane behavior, as we call it? Then in those respects many animals are human, and many humans are not....

Intelligence? The mental grasp? The same is true. Why, Hilda here always knows as much as the average native who comes to the mission.”

“But, you know, with all due respect, I think your argument is absurd. There are certain standards; there are physical differences, and so forth, that we all recognize, and....” Colonel Trevor floundered in the unaccustomed effort to express himself upon an abstruse subject. “I refuse to subscribe to your theories,” he finally finished somewhat lamely ... “at all,” he added conclusively.

“I am sure I shan’t try to impress them upon you,” Hungerford returned a little stiffly. “You asked me the question which brought up the subject in the first place, you may remember; and I’ve only been trying to answer it as well as I could so far as my observations have yet gone.”

“My dear chap, don’t let’s have words over it,” begged the Colonel. “There are too few white men in

54

this God-forsaken place for any of us to be on bad terms with one another. And besides, it would be ridiculous for us to fall out over a foolish monkey.”

At this point Hilda, who had been pouring Hungerford a second cup of tea, apparently lost her hold on the teapot, which landed upon the table with a bang. Scowling, she turned and left the room as both men looked around. Absorbed in their conversation, they had forgotten her presence for the moment.

“I don’t think you quite understand how I feel about Hilda,” the missionary said quietly. “In the first place, to be zoölogically accurate, she isn’t a *monkey* at all; she belongs to the anthropoid group of apes, which includes only the chimpanzee, gorilla, orang-utan and gibbon. They are quite different from the monkeys in size, physique, habits, mentality, and other respects; as different as lions and tigers from house cats. In the second place, Hilda seems to be an exception, even among the apes. I have become a good deal more attached to her than I have to Rimpano. Without her I should be very lonely here indeed.”

“That’s the awfulness of this place; one does get beastly lonely,” agreed Colonel Trevor. “Makes one a bit morbid,” he supplemented thoughtfully, by way of explaining the matter to himself. “You mustn’t stay so much alone, old man. It’s bad enough at the Post, and here it’s enough to give you the willies....

Come to the tennis match tomorrow. I'll back you up."

"He doesn't understand at all," thought the other, giving it up.

The Colonel was evidently not much interested in Hilda. Hungerford changed the subject, and when his guest rose to go accompanied him to the edge of the clearing, agreeing to be present at the match on the morrow.

CHAPTER IX.

VISITING RIMPANO'S WITCH DOCTOR

Part I

HUNGERFORD'S experience with the thoroughly uncongenial and disagreeable Bishop had left him so pent-up that he was quite determined to get as far away as possible for a few days from all civilized humans. As by luck, he had been invited to visit an old friend of Rimpano's, Salaema, the noted witch doctor of Lost Lake. This previously unheard of place, according to Rimpano, was far in the interior. And the people there were half cannibals. Just when and how Rimpano had been able to make this friendship, not even Hungerford could find out. For no one can know so little as an African when he desires to!

Hungerford decided that only Rimpano should accompany him, for he wished to find out a number of things pertaining to the savages and also the apes that would make it advisable for him to be practically alone. Old Maumee, the aged caretaker of the little mission, and a faithful and good friend of Hilda's, would care for Hungerford's home and for Hilda during his absence. He would travel by foot, as

57

Rimpano knew the best roads, and they would carry no guns. This would not only assure a better reception by the natives, but it would make it possible for Hungerford to study nature and do a bit of collecting on the way.

They started in the early morning, and at noon of the first day, they stopped to rest by a brook, where Hungerford hastily undressed and plunged in for a bath. The weather was perfect; and after finishing his bath, he lay for a long time upon the cool, white sands to dry and meditate by the mossy brook, listening to the song of a bird that reminded him of the nightingale back in England. This brief rest made it possible for him to enjoy the beauty of the scenery and the wonderful melodies. His troubled mind was soon in tune with the tranquillity of nature.

It was good to be far from noisy, chattering people, who were ever seeking an argument over things that only God knew. Here he could dream away hours, meditating upon life—its miracles, marvels, problems and paradoxes! Strange now it seemed that the Bishop should have so disturbed him! Why should anyone ever attempt to convince anyone of anything! Nature makes no explanations, but she is ever ready to reveal her secrets, but only to those prepared to understand. Man tries to convince others who are not prepared.

58

Life is a mirror, he thought, that reflects each man as he is. Only a fool can deceive himself. He remembered the old childhood game of looking in the glass to see the monkey. The Bishop should do the same, for he was a successful, downright, crude man, and wore, as most so-called civilized men do, only a thin veneer of civilization, whose underneath was filled with civilized pretenses and shams. He was neither better nor worse than the average self-satisfied, selfish, civilized being, who, deep within his soul, is filled with uncontrollable impulses that war constantly with all the truth and honor that man has been able to evolve for himself. Hungerford was determined that he would remain true to his nobler self at all costs, helping each and every creature to the best of his ability, “doing unto others as he would that they should do unto him,” whether man or beast. All his life he had been struggling with man-made laws, made for man only. Now he would obey the laws of his conscience in regard to all things.

Hungerford arose, and lazily dressed himself, and being ready to go on he motioned to Rimpano, who was dreaming away under a pawpaw tree; soon they continued on their journey. Suddenly, as they walked along, Hungerford noticed not three feet away the leaf of a huge cat-tail swaying to and fro in the breeze. Something on it glistened like a blue gem. He

59

found upon careful examination three tiny African swifts; each neatly strapped with bits of dry grass onto the swaying cat-tail. He remembered that it was the habit of these swifts to carefully strap their babies to the reeds, so that the wind would rock them and thus keep the mosquitoes away. Sparkling in the sun they were their mother’s jewels indeed!

From here he watched the sunbeams quivering on the rocks below, while sprawling high upon an over-hanging limb of a bay-rum tree, a night-

blooming cereus was gorging itself with sunlight, while others were among the mosses seeking the cool shade. At the foot of the tree a delicate blue lobelia nestled among the rocks and ferns. Far above him a towering wall of foliage, dark, impenetrable, mysterious, with the branches of mammoth trees reaching almost into the heavens, and sparkling with gaudy blue and white orchids, sitting at giddy heights upon the branches, fascinated him. Sunbirds, like floating jewels, darted in and out among the perfumed flowers of this African paradise, while over and above all an ambitious silk tree reached forth its massive branches like pillars in a great cathedral.

It was now past noon and Rimpano, who had been lazily sunning himself, prepared the frugal meal, consisting of sandwiches and cold tea from a thermos bottle. Hungerford then began to collect a few rare

60

flowers and placed them between sheets of newspaper for his botanical collections. When he had pressed the flowers, he took a green gauze and caught a few rarely colored butterflies; one had purple splotches over its wings and iridescent pink beneath them. These he placed in a glass jar that contained gas. Beneath an old log he found several beetles, each colored like a living gem, with tiny armor plates of macaw yellow and green that changed with every position in the light. Small flocks of ricebirds were darting in and out of the ferns almost at his feet, picking up white ants with their snake-like tongues.

“Come, heap hurry!” Rimpano shouted from a nearby cave. There were thousands of vampire-looking bats, with peculiar fox-like faces and large dusky wings. In the evening these children of Erebus come forth and seek the fruit trees in the moonlight, chattering like apes. He noticed a young bat, which had fallen to the ground, climbing up the side of a tree by means of a tiny claw attached to the corner of the wing.

“Them bats good to eat,” Rimpano informed him; but Hungerford had no desire for such delicacies!

They had stopped to rest upon a large fallen log, and Hungerford’s mind was dwelling upon all the marvelous beauty and wonder about him. Yet somehow he was lonely, and his mind returned to his

61

native England, with all her luxury of nature colors. He remembered a certain meadow carpeted with bluebells, and the autumns with all their

hues, and a summer meadow ablaze with yellow cowslips. Africa, he realized, did not have all the beauty.

Late in the afternoon they arrived at the witch doctor's home, but no one was there to greet them. Rimpano pushed the door, and his hand went through. He started to sit down in a chair on the porch. It dropped to pieces.

"Ants, white ants! They done come and eat up home!"

It was true. They come in millions there, and if houses are in the way, the lawful owners get out if they can. Bedridden persons are often killed. Rimpano excitedly explained:

"Ants heap eat big drunk Christian man one night. Big Chief's wife had died and him's so much drunk that him fall sleep in forest, and come big much ants and eat him's up!"

Nature seems to have been quite extravagant with the number of white ants; but in reality an African forest is a charnel house where the mammoth trees extend for thousands of miles, covering untold numbers of dead and decaying things, from animals to decaying vegetation and fruits. If it were not for the

62

ants and their work as scavengers, the atmosphere would be fatal to man.

An army of driving ants were passing in front of them, when Hungerford noticed some were carrying their young in their mouths, and with the procession was a peculiar snake-like creature.

"Him king of ants," Rimpano volunteered. "Him go long to help make big ant town!"

This reminded Hungerford of Bate's "Amazon," that tells of a kind of slow-worm which dwells among the ants, and is supposed to help the commonwealth. But on the other hand, when this creature's body is opened it is found to contain ants.

Part II

It was getting late in the afternoon, and Hungerford was tired from the long day's travel. "How far is your friend's house from here?" he asked.

"Him's big house not heap far," replied the African. "Us almost there."

"But I thought that was his house that the white ants had eaten!"

"Huh, that him's weddin' house, where him live with him new wife when him buy one. You'm know when us get to pow-pow house."

Presently Hungerford and Rimpano emerged from the main road into a narrow, sandy creek bottom, which was lined with mangrove trees, waiting for

63

the rainy season to set in. Behind the mangroves rose a huge wall of silk-oak trees, with open, sunlit spaces, like small windows here and there. Yellow and red parrots screamed at the intruders from their high perches, while monkeys sprang from limb to limb in their excitement. Hungerford wondered if this might have been the kind of a place in which Hilda lived.

“Here us almost there!” Rimpano ejaculated. The ringing of the bells and banging of pistols could be heard close by. Just in front of them a native, with a huge hoop-like ring in his nose approached and saluted them in the following extraordinary manner:

“My wife she die! Have big drink with me!” Then taking a small calabash of wine from a bag, he offered it to Hungerford, who for courtesy, merely sipped a bit of it. But Rimpano did justice to the dead by drinking three pints. Each time Rimpano was informed by this generous-hearted man that his wife was dead, and always in the same, happy manner. Funerals are festive always among these natives. This is not only out of respect for the dead’s ghost, but to drive away the gloom.

It was almost dark when they arrived at the witch doctor’s pow-wow house. While Rimpano was celebrating with the mourner, villagers came running into the town, a town which consisted of a few bamboo huts, encircled with cocoanut trees, with a

64

lengthy pole lying upon the earth. Rimpano gave one of the men a plug of tobacco, who in return raised the pole and knocked down a cocoanut, punctured it and gave it to Rimpano to drink the contents. Several of the natives were standing by, and the nut in falling struck one of the women on the head. She gave a terribly shrill and bloodcurdling yell and ran for her hut. It was evident though that the wound upon her forehead was slight. The black woman immediately brought forth a flattened bullet, which she had carefully wrapped in red tissue paper, and as flattened as if it had struck a piece of iron. She claimed it had struck her head when someone shot at her and felt very proud of having such a hard skull. Evidently the bullet had suffered, not the head!

As soon as the natives had learned that the white preacher had arrived, the village became a seething mass of blacks. Each man carried a huge knife. They formed a large circle about an aged rose tree, and Hungerford was escorted through the circle to where the witch doctor sat—old Salaema. Rimpano remained in the rear. When Salaema spied him, he clapped together two brass cymbals as a greeting and shook hands with himself. Rimpano said something to him in the native dialect, but Hungerford could not understand.

Salaema wore a large ivory ring in his nose, carved

65

with curious figures, and his eyes were slit on each side to make them look larger. He had enormous bushy eyelashes, like the hair of a hyena. His movements were awkward, and his whole appearance was more like some monstrous ape than a man. His feet were covered with a kind of bamboo sandal, through which his long, claw-like toenails protruded. He jabbered incoherently, making a peculiar, whistling sound; and occasionally he would take a piece of animal skin from his pocket and blow into it, producing a kind of noise like a horn. He was frightened at Hungerford's appearance, and when the missionary turned around for a moment to speak with Rimpano, Salaema's hands disappeared! Rimpano explained that the animal skin dress was made with two holes so that one could draw in his hands at will. "Him ugly looks am what Satan give him for eatin' human man!" Rimpano explained.

Later Rimpano was speaking with Salaema and told him that Hungerford was a great fetishman that preached about the greatest fetishman that ever lived; and then Rimpano presented his friend with a handkerchief that belonged to Hungerford. Rolling his eyes with delight, Salaema shouted several words in his dialect; for a gift of clothing is a fetish of the highest degree. Then waving the handkerchief about his head, he began growling like an angry ape, and

66

to Hungerford's amazement, jabbered in half-coherent English:

"Who big white man what's been drinkin' my wine! Me kill him if him no hurry pay!"

Rimpano seemed greatly ashamed of his friend's conduct, and explained to Hungerford that this was Salaema's way of demanding pay for the wine

that had been drunk. Rimpano, at Hungerford's suggestion, walked to the front and handed the witch doctor a silver dollar, who received it with a grunt and a prayer in which he thanked the Great Spirit for revealing the debtor and for the payment of the just debt. The whole affair was a solemn warning to Hungerford against the cunning and thieving avarice of a fetishman.

Salaema was neither beloved nor esteemed by the flocks; but he was clever enough to keep them in holy terror of his supernatural power. This attitude is usually true of all fetishmen. Yet though they be hated, their powers are never questioned. They use prayer and psychic powers to deliver oracles, heal diseases, detect criminals, foretell the future, superintend all sacrifices, rites, and religious ceremonies.

Salaema had a peculiar reed-like whistle, with an orifice covered with a bat's wing, which produced a sound not unlike that coming from humming on a comb laid with thin paper. The natives declared it to

67

be voices from the spirit world. Hungerford was determined to find out more about this heathenish practice, and against the strong protestations of Rimpano remained there long enough to know that the witch doctor's superstitions often end in great tragedy.

The next evening, while Rimpano was talking with Salaema, Hungerford was awakened from his nap by a wild and ghostly cry. An aged woman, who was gathering cocoanuts just outside his window, burst forth in clamorous lamentation. Rimpano, with eyes almost popping out, rushed into Hungerford's room, and exclaimed:

"Somebody dead! Witch doctor soon find out who do it!"

While these Africans know death can never be escaped as their song proves—

Rich man, poor man, all must die;
Bodies are shadows, why should I be sad?

Yet it is not regarded by them as a natural event, and when a person of importance dies, the fetishman is summoned to make a post-mortem examination, and discover the cause of his death.

Suddenly the sound of a drum outside was heard. "Bum, bum, bum, bum!" Its language is understood by all the natives. It summons to the pow-

wow all who hear it. There is a call to the marriage, a call

68

to fight fire, a call to avenge death; and now it was saying: "Come! Come! Come! Come to the ordeal! Someone is dead! Who did it?"

The blacks poured forth like so many rats in the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Some weeping, some laughing, others staring with fright, but all making for the pow-wow where someone would be accused of the man's death.

Salaema, with a huge leopard skin in his lap, sat beneath the bayrum tree, surrounded by a large circle of people. He was the chief fetishman. The people began to march round and round him chanting: "Somebody die, somebody die, somebody die today!" When the song was done, he arose and, gazing all about as though he were viewing the future, suddenly pointed at the old woman who had been gathering cocoanuts, and shouted: "Great Spirit say it am you." He arose, and walking over to her, laid the leopard skin over her shoulders. She was the witch! And he would now administer the ordeal. As is usually the case, the witch is a person of no importance, or one against whom the fetishman has a grudge. In this case it was because she had refused to give him the best cocoanut.

The accused woman lay upon the ground writhing in agony, while a servant of Salaema, at his command, brought forth a wooden club with which to

69

chastise the witch. Only the men were killed in order that their souls could be sent to hell. But the native women were in no danger, because in the African's faith a woman has no soul. But this big, stalwart black woman was now determined to check any such punishments that a mere little man might want to heap upon her, for no reason at all she could see. So suddenly, while she was crying in agony, her grief changed to anger, and with a quick alertness (standing bent and staring like some raving maniac) she stood motionless for a second—only long enough to seize her senses. Then she bounded forth, slapping the servant down with one hand and grabbing the club in the other. Before anyone realized what was happening the wild woman rushed over, clutching the witch doctor, pounded him heavily over the head with the knotted weapon, and left him sprawling upon the ground in a stupor, to be drenched in warm blood. Then, bounding through the woods, like a giantess, she disappeared. No one dared pursue

her. Some of the natives hurried to Salaema and set to work reviving him; while the others sought their huts and the scene soon changed to quietness.

Hungerford was dazed with this exciting and strange episode, and stood gaping at the sight of it all. It was only when the scene was cleared of the blacks that he and Rimpano departed for home.

CHAPTER X.

THE UNEXPECTED

THE night was intensely hot, and Hungerford did not rest well. Just before daylight a heavy shower cooled the atmosphere, and he arose early to find that the sky was without a cloud and the day promised to be unusually pleasant. The sun had not yet risen but Rimpano was already cooking breakfast, so that he might go for the mail soon.

Mail arrived at the Post but once a week, brought overland from Entebbe by a couple of native carriers, and awaited by everyone with hope and anxiety and longing.

When Hungerford did not go to Rambunda himself, on mail days, he sent Rimpano. Hilda had learned the importance to her master of those white envelopes and packets of newspapers. She knew that, whatever the reason, he was always glad when he received any news. And so, wanting each week to bring him this pleasure, she generally went to meet Rimpano on the trail to the Post, running ahead, as soon as he appeared, to take the mail from him. He surrendered it to her good-naturedly. He had long since learned that she would deliver it as conscientiously as any postman,

71

though it were nothing but a postcard. To refuse he knew meant a tempestuous scene.

The sun was high in the heavens when Hungerford walked to the door and looked out for Rimpano. The latter had been gone two hours and it was time for him to return. In the distance the missionary saw Hilda running toward the stockade with the mail in her hand. He eagerly opened a letter; it was from Lady Cornelia, and bore an Italian postmark. It was the first word he had had from her in three months.

“My dear Chester:

“I’m in Rome again, as you see. Came here with Arthur and Evelyn, and now I’m visiting the Wamburtons. I got dreadfully bored with London, and as there was nothing in particular that I wanted to do with myself, Evelyn persuaded me to come this far with them. Now there’s a definite prospect of my going farther. She and Arthur are to sail for your Dark Continent, after a short stay here, and what do you think?—they are going, not to Egypt, but to British East Africa!

“Arthur has been detailed to Nairobi, and I’m going to follow them next month for a long visit, if I don’t change my mind in the mean-

72

time. So we may see each other, after all. How ripping that would be!

“Evelyn is quite desolate at the thought of being sent into exile, as she calls it. She said even Cairo would have been bad enough for a long stay, but to send a bride and groom to some place that most of her friends had never *heard* of was nothing short of criminal. I suggested that she might stop at home, but she said that she couldn’t give up Arthur, even if it meant living in a mud hut on the Congo for the rest of her life.

“*Do* they have mud huts there, Chester? I fancy when we reach Nairobi, we’ll find Bond Street shops and a Ritz-Carlton and cinemas and trams, just like any other part of the world in this prosaic age, and the Zulu ladies (or aren’t they Zulus?) wearing the latest Pierrette frocks and going to the *dansants*!

“I hope not, though, for I’m pining for some really aboriginal atmosphere, for a change, and clinging with touching faith to your description of your jungle life in the bamboo shack with your black servant and that remarkable monkey. It sounds delightful—quite like Robinson Crusoe.

“I dare say by this time you have trained a whole servant corps of monkeys to run your

73

establishment for you. With your faith in their powers you should certainly be able to do so. A gorilla butler would be a novelty; I am sure it would attract people to your teas. And you might even break a nice, clever, ambitious, young baboon into filling the curacy for you. He could read the Litany quite as intelligently as poor Mr. Wattle did at St. Giles. When you were short of help, he might very well be pressed into grinding (I beg your pardon! I mean, playing) the organ and taking up

the collection in a tin cup. You could keep a rope attached to him, in the most approved style, if you weren't certain of his integrity.

"But there, old dear, I'm done teasing you—and writing this nonsensical letter, too, for it's time now to dress for dinner. (Do you dress for dinner in your bamboo shack? I can fancy you saying to your orang-outang valet, 'Bombo, put out my best bib and tucker tonight; the King of the Cannibal Isles is coming to dine, and I want to look my finest.') Well, I shall let you hear again shortly. And you've no idea how I'm rejoicing over the possibility of seeing you so soon. If we're not too far off, of course you'll get leave and run up to see us. I've a thousand things I'd love to say to you this very evening.

74

"I haven't told you a thing about what's going on here, but as it's the same old round of places and people, and I know how little you care for this sort of thing, I thought I'd not bore you with it.

"Take care of yourself, Chester, and always wear flannel pajamas and bedshoes, so that you'll not catch cold in that rigorous climate. Sarah Wamburton sends her love! But then, she's old enough and married enough to do anything shocking that she pleases. You'll have to take mine for granted!

"Yours as ever,

"CORNELIA MOWBRAY."

The letter amused Hungerford, as her conversation always had. It brought back the outside world as no other communication he had received lately had done; and besides he did not receive many letters.

He was surprised and a little thrilled to know that she actually intended to come to Africa, and that he might see her. He had never really thought she would. The letter had been written more than a month before. She had doubtless already left Italy. And Arthur and Evelyn must be in Nairobi by this time—barely four hundred miles away! He must write to them at once.

Other messages followed from Lady Cornelia during

75

the next few weeks, confirming his conjectures that she was on her way. At last came a note from her at Nairobi, upon the heels of one from Arthur in reply to the letter Hungerford had written him.

Hungerford had seen little of Colonel Trevor since the day of their argument about Hilda. They had met at the tennis match and several times at the Post. But, though it had been a sort of unwritten law that he should dine with the Colonel about twice a month, he now felt some hesitancy in presenting himself, uninvited for dinner. However, a definite invitation which came a few days after the receipt of Arthur's letter eased his mind, and when he arrived at the Colonel's house he found several other officers present.

"Quite a dinner-party!" laughed Lieutenant Telford. "Gad! What I'd give for a real time once more! —dinner at the Carlton and a box at the Gaiety, and supper at Claridge's with a couple of the prettiest coryphées, or perhaps with only one! ..."

"Come to, my lad; you're in a trance!" Colonel Trevor slapped him heavily upon the back. "And don't belittle the present festivities. It cost the cook not a little thought and effort to get up this banquet—and all in the honor of Jennings' departure."

"You're a lucky pup, Jennings," enviously declared another man. "Going back to God's country!"

76

"Lucky!" Captain Jennings returned in a tired voice. "Do you call being invalided home *lucky*?"

"I'd call anything that would get a chap out of hell, luck," the other insisted. "God pity the poor beggar that's taking your place, though!"

After four years spent in Africa, a complete nervous breakdown, following a severe attack of jungle fever, had at last brought Captain Jennings, in a somewhat ironical way, the long coveted chance to return to England. Hungerford had not heard the news, and, questioning the men further, he learned that the new Captain, who was being sent up, was bringing his bride with him.

"You don't get any of the gossip, Hungerford, sticking out there in the woods. Why don't you come to town where things are going on?" chaffed big, good-natured Major Hoskins, the army surgeon.

His own middle-aged wife was the only white woman in the Post at present. One of the other officers had been married, but his wife had died not long before—of homesickness, everyone had declared.

The idea of having a young attractive woman—any young woman would be attractive in their eyes—at the Post had put new spirit into the

lives of the listless men.

“Fancy having a pretty woman to flirt with again!” exclaimed young Telford. “Won’t it be topping!”

77

“It’ll be purgatory for her, though; poor lady!” put in Colonel Trevor.

“What? Flirting with me?” answered Telford flippantly. “You’re not very complimentary to my powers, Colonel; though I’ll admit that they’ve become a bit atrophied from disuse.”

“Oh, stow it, Telford!” the Colonel returned, a trifle irritably. “You know jolly well that I was referring to the place and not to your Don Juan accomplishments.”

“Yes, it will be rotten for her, as it has been for Mrs. Hoskins,” was the opinion of a morose subaltern who had not yet spoken. “Even worse for a newcomer and a bride, though. I wonder she stands for his bringing her here! ...” he was thinking of his own young wife, who was in England with her people, having firmly refused to follow him into the wilderness —“probably has no notion of the sort of hole it is. Thinks it a regular African Simla, no doubt. Well, she’ll get a beastly jar when she arrives. I dare say he’ll have a job to prevent her from starting back on the next ship.”

“What’s his name?” Hungerford asked at this point. “Do any of you know him?”

“Arthur Norton; he’s a son of Lord Sloane. I’ve never met him, but I know the family. And I suppose you do too, Hungerford. Their place isn’t far

78

from Winfield. He married Lady Evelyn Mowbray, whose uncle—”

But Hungerford cut short the Colonel’s flow of information with a wondering laugh. “Well, I’ll be hanged! I should say I do know them. Rather! Why, they’re in Nairobi now!”

“I know. That’s how he was ordered up here, as the most available substitute for Jennings. What sort of a man is he?”

“Nice chap. I don’t know him so well, though. But I’ve known Evelyn and her sister, Cornelia, practically all my life. Just heard from them the other day. Cornelia has come out to visit them, and I was to go to Nairobi to see them. It had never occurred to me they could possibly be sent here.”

“Well, that’ll be jolly for you—and them too. It is a small world, isn’t it?” Colonel Trevor was generally able, whatever unforeseen events might threaten his British equipoise, to meet the situation satisfactorily with a platitude.

CHAPTER XI.

HILDA'S MISTAKE

HUNGERFORD occupied most of his morning hours in teaching a class of young natives to read and write elementary English. It was slow work, and he often sighed hopelessly at the stupidity of these benighted humans. As the black youngsters sweated laboriously over the transcription of such mentally exhausting profundities as "Christ died to save me," Hungerford reflected that Hilda was, in many respects, a far more responsive pupil.

He had a particularly unpromising group of natives with which to deal. Their savage indifference, for the most part, to what he tried to teach them, as well as their degraded habits of living, discouraged and disgusted him. He surmised that fear of the British army, rather than respect for him and his teachings, was almost altogether responsible for their toleration of the mission.

Most of the residents of the native village had picked up a little broken English in their dealings with the whites at the Post. But many of the tribes in the surrounding country knew nothing of the

80

language. And Hungerford, even in spite of constant study, had as yet learned but little of the numerous dialects.

He was feeling sadly out of sympathy with his fellowman during these disillusioning days—decidedly he was no *Abou Ben Adhem*! Often he wondered if his unsympathetic attitude toward people, as well as his unorthodoxy, might not have had much to do with his failure to win his congregation in Winfield, and if it had not also been hindering his progress here. He determined to make a greater effort to let the simple Christ-love for all mankind, instead of intellectual judgment and critical determination, influence his attitude in his work.

The successful African missionary should be a Jack-of-all-trades, and a master of at least a dozen of them. He must be able and willing to give ear to all sorts of requests—to act not only as priest, but as doctor, judge and

jury, pedagogue, veterinarian, sanitation authority and even Santa Claus. Often while Hungerford was struggling with the preparation of a sermon, which would satisfy his interpretation of one of the simpler texts (and yet reach down to the sub-infantile intelligence of the blacks), some native would come to him for a dose of medicine or some flea powder. Flea powder in Africa sometimes seems more desirable than the promises of the gospel.

81

Hungerford had learned that those who understood him at all took everything he said in his services with absolute literalness, or misinterpreted his remarks ludicrously—and sometimes disastrously—through their association of his words with some of their standards and customs.

Their inattention at the services had been a problem that he had long thought over. He determined to teach them the propriety of closing their eyes and bowing their heads during prayer. So on the following morning, when he was ready to begin the service he remarked:

“We are now in the Lord’s house, and during prayer we should bow our heads and close our eyes, that we may hear and think upon what is being said....” A sudden commotion interrupted him; some of the children screamed, while their elders began to moan and quake in terror.

“We all go home—never more come back!” shouted one woman, as she rushed from the place in tears. Others followed as soon as the prayer was over, and betook themselves helter-skelter back to the native village. A panic broke up the service.

Hungerford was dumbfounded and could not imagine what he had done to cause such an ending to a service that he had thought was going particularly well. Then Rimpano explained:

82

“Them terrible scared when them shut eyes! Big witch doctor always told them Debil-spirit walked among them during prayer, and that all them must shut their eyes tight and no see—if them do—them all die. You’m said to shut eyes just like big witch doctor. Them scared of Debil that walk about!”

Hungerford understood that this was why the trembling mothers had held their hands over the babies’ eyes and crouched upon the ground,

wailing, when he ordered them to close their eyes, in their fear lest one of them might inadvertently peep and suffer a terrible doom.

Once Hungerford preached a sermon that seemed especially practical, telling them that their troubles would seem small and unimportant if they had the right feeling within themselves. He told them that they must try to be more unselfish and get the spirit of Christianity. When he had finished, one of the men arose and expressed his appreciation. This talk, he said, had helped him more than any that the missionary had given before.

“You’m much right,” he agreed. “Us all have trouble inside from big feast las’ week; us sick too, three day; big sick at belly. You’m goin’ give us some that spirit medicine you’m say make well inside and make Christian?”

83

An aged native, one of the councilmen of the tribe, on his death-bed sent for Hungerford and asked:

“Me soon die—and all me have is them elephant tusks. Can me get big heap salvation from Lord for them?”

When the missionary explained that the Lord had no use for ivory, the man interrupted him by saying: “Me then give me two wives to go to Hell in me place, if good Lord take. For them so mean and wicked them ought to go to Hell anyway!”

At another time, when a woman had claimed that she was converted, her husband, who had previously seemed interested in his services, arose and left the mission abruptly, after explaining: “If she go to Heaven, me no want to go.”

Hungerford rebuked a member of the congregation for having beaten one of his wives. The man promised never to do it again; but on the very next day, when passing through the native village, Hungerford heard the woman screaming for help. The husband, upon being summoned and again taken severely to task, earnestly offered his defense: “But I no beat her now no more. My big friend—I let him beat her for me.” Thus he had hoped to settle a difficult point to both his priest’s and his own satisfaction.

Hilda now came openly to the services. She sat

84

huddled on a cushion beside the melodeon, the wheezy music of which was to her the most fascinating part of the service. At first the natives had been

surprised to see her there, always so quiet and well-behaved, and the white man had laughed at her solemnity. But in time her regular attendance at the mission had come to be taken for granted by all.

During prayer she bowed her head as the others did; but all kept their eyes warily open, with Hungerford's permission, since the service at which they all still believed that the Evil One had been present. During the prayers Hilda let her bright eyes rove from Hungerford's face to the different members of the congregation, but she never raised her head until she heard the amen. When Hungerford repeated the Lord's Prayer, her lips were always seen to move in unison with his, although no one was able to distinguish what she was saying, if anything.

When the natives first observed how considerately the missionary treated her, they whispered among themselves that she was a sacred ape, and looked upon her with some degree of awe.

One day the Chief asked him: "Do Hilda Ape go to Heaven some day, just like me?"

Hungerford scarcely knew what to answer, but he finally said: "I hope you will both go to Heaven some

85

day, but you must not be too sure of it. If Hilda tries, like the rest of us, to be good as well as she knows how, I see no reason why she should not go too."

Then he noticed that she was still sitting on her cushion beside the little organ, her wistful face raised to watch his, as though anxiously awaiting his answer to the Chief. When he had given it, was it fancy that her expression changed, as if some troubling, haunting doubt had been set at rest by his words?

Hilda's belief in Hungerford was absolute. She unquestionably accepted as right everything that he said or did. On one occasion her literal acceptance of an act of his was fraught with unhappy consequences. One morning soon after he had dined with Colonel Trevor, Hilda came back from a short excursion into the forest with her arms filled with flowers. Seating herself under the tamarind tree, she began weaving the gorgeous blossoms into a wreath. Hungerford watched her with curiosity and delight from the porch where he had been writing, marveling at her skill. It seemed to him that she must have had special training in the art of making wreaths.

It was nearly lunch time, and when he called her to the porch she brought with her the finished wreath and held it out to him with a strange unaccustomed

86

shyness. He took it and examined the large blue, purple and crimson blossoms, with a strongly sweet odor, unlike any he had ever seen.

“It is lovely, Hilda. Did you make it for me?” he asked as simply as if he had been speaking to a child. He had become convinced that she understood whatever he said to her, and had grown so accustomed to talking to her that he was no longer conscious of doing anything out of the ordinary.

Her answer, as he seated himself at the table, was to take the wreath from his hands again, and, jabbering in ape-like language, reach up and place it hesitatingly upon his head.

As he caught the reflection of himself in the shining surface of the silver sugar basin he laughed and removed the decoration, saying playfully:

“That’s very nice of you, Hilda. But I’m afraid it’s not quite becoming to a parson. I think it would look much better on you.” And he lightly tossed the wreath at her. It was too large for her small head, and slid over it, falling as a garland around her neck.

With a little squeak of happiness, she sprang upon a chair beside him and chattered in a strange way, as if trying to make him understand something important she wished to tell. He patted her upon the head, and at this moment Rimpano entered with the luncheon tray.

87

The African stopped and stared at Hilda. Then a broad grin overspread his face. Hastily setting down the tray, he covered his big mouth with his black hand and, turning, hurried back to the cook-shed. As he rounded the corner, his smothered laughter was distinctly audible and he said, “She now go away.”

Putting Hilda down, Hungerford rose and called to the man to come back. After an interval he reappeared, his face now wearing an ebony mask of gravity. Sternly the missionary demanded:

“What is the matter with you, Rimpano? Why didn’t you serve the luncheon? You know better than to leave the things on the tray and walk

out in that manner! What did you mean by saying Hilda would go away? And what were you laughing about?”

“No, no! Me no laugh; me no say she go—me forget the sugar. Me so heap sorry to forget. Please excuse....” As usual he was profoundly and wordily apologetic, but not explanatory.

A subtle and vague disgust came over Hungerford ... disgust at the jungle, disgust that he had ever set foot on the dark continent, disgust with himself that he had ever trusted Africans or apes, who really had ways much the same. It couldn't be that Hilda ... No; his mind refused to work in that channel! As to Rimpano's explanations, they were all heathenish fabrications. Anyway, he knew what he was in for.

88

With a shrug, Hungerford abandoned the subject. He had learned the futility of trying to extract any fact from a native who had made up his mind not to give it. Rimpano was like all the rest of the natives in this respect. They would lie, and lie indefinitely, obligingly telling a different version each time that the previous one was doubted; and each tale would carry them further away from the truth.

That evening Hilda disappeared again. Hungerford hoped that she would return the next day but she did not, and he knew that it was useless to try to get her back until she would come of her own accord. Surely she would come. He could not think of the place without her now.

Her departure was a mystery. She had been with him so long that it had ceased to occur to him that she might some day leave again. Had she at last been seized with a sudden nostalgia? Hungerford asked Rimpano if he had any idea what might account for her departure. The servant wrinkled his black brow into great furrows, always an indication, the missionary had learned, of deep and difficult thought; but at last he declared that he could not explain it.

More than a week passed, and Hilda did not return. Hungerford could not keep from thinking of her; and as he thought it all over—her recent strange actions and sudden departure—it began to take on a

89

semi-ludicrous aspect in his mind. Certainly she meant a great deal to him, even more than any pet dog he had ever owned; but the idea of being afraid

that something would happen to her in the forest, her native home, that was absurd! He laughed freely at the thought of it.

Yet he was aware that she had become more to him now than a mere subject for study. Her loss seemed even greater than the loss of a pet dog. There was not an hour in the day when he was not reminded of her in some way, and particularly at tea time. She had been like a playful puppy; for her to pour his tea had become a custom.

She did not drink it herself, but always had a bowl of either goat's milk or cocoanut milk, and ate great quantities of tea cakes and muffins. Hungerford had always buttered these for her, not because she was not clever enough to have buttered them herself, but rather because he had wanted a share in the duties of serving.

As he gulped down his lonely cup of tea in the afternoon he thought dolefully of the pleasant half-hours they had always spent over the tea table. Hilda would start the phonograph and they would linger happily over their refreshment, to the strains of "Under the Bamboo Tree", or "Zanzibar." How she loved the latter song! He had to laugh in reminiscence

90

as he recalled her rapt attention whenever it was played:

"My little Chimpanzee,
No monkey shines for me;
A place I'll make for thee
In my own family tree.
And when you come to me,
A wedding feast shall be
In high society
Of Zanzibar."

The phonograph-stand and the instrument were dusty now. It had not been touched since she had gone away.

Rimpano missed her also, especially on house cleaning days. She dearly loved to wield a broom and see the dust fly, seeming to feel that the more she raised the more effectual was her work. And she had kept the place free from vermin ever since she had come to the shack. Any unfortunate caterpillars, beetles, or other bugs which had crossed her path she had promptly eaten. This unlovely habit of hers was one which always made

Hungerford wince. Often when he had seen her catch a roach and pop it in her mouth, then heard the crunch of her teeth upon it, he had actually shuddered with repulsion. And as she had grown more familiar with his moods, Hilda had

91

begun to sense his objections to this, although he had never expressed them.

He remembered one evening just before she left, when he was working on a sermon, that she sat across the table from him, under the big lamp, curled among the cushions of the wicker chair and engrossed in the colored pictures of a children's edition of "Pilgrim's Progress." A big spider had swung itself leisurely down from the ceiling and made a landing upon the lamp-shade. As it travelled around the rim, Hilda's eyes fastened longingly upon it, then wavered guiltily to Hungerford who was apparently unconscious of the expression on her face. With another furtive glance at the spider, she dragged her attention back to the picture of a Christian struggling in the Slough of Despond, and something very like a sigh had escaped her lips. It was now that Hungerford gave a surreptitious glance at Hilda and noticed her discomfiture at the temerity of a solitary spider. And perceiving the incident he gave a meaningless yawn, put his book down and left the room. A minute later he came back and Hilda was perusing her picture book at ease and the spider was gone.

92

CHAPTER XII.

HILDA'S TRIBE CELEBRATES

HUNGERFORD'S desire for Hilda's return was so great that he sent Rimpano among the natives to offer a liberal reward for her recovery. He knew that she was somewhere in the great forest; but that was as boundless as the ocean and practically impossible of access to humans except along the elephant trails.

The news of the missionary's offer spread so rapidly among the blacks that, though Rimpano had not gone among them until after nine o'clock in the morning, before noon a number of native guides and porters had offered their services. While Hungerford was bargaining with them over the amount of tobacco and matches he should have to pay in case they found her, Rimpano rushed up, panting with excitement, and shouted:

"Monkey folks all have big dance tonight! Big celebrate when moon rise high by lake!"

"Will Hilda be there?" Hungerford asked—more to see what his servant would say than actually to gain information, for he did not believe that Rimpano knew.

93

"Maybe, no can tell. Soco know."

"Who is Soco?"

"Him strong man who know all ape folks, and what them do. Him show you where Hilda go, if you give him heap tobac and fine red shirt."

"I'll do that; go get him."

A moment later, before Rimpano had even turned around, Soco stepped out from behind a clump of banana bushes, where he had concealed himself to listen to the bargain. Grinning sheepishly, Rimpano explained:

"Him come quick, when you'm have tobac!" And the natives chuckled among themselves at what they considered a clever act on the part of Soco.

Hungerford had heard much about Soco and his strange interest and knowledge of the apes. From a missionary Soco had learned to speak English fairly well, and was known to be a fairly reliable and trustworthy

black—one of the very few of his kind. The promise of two plugs of tobacco and a red shirt clinched the bargain, and unloosed a tongue skilled in ape lore.

“Monkey folks been gettin’ all Koola nuts and bananas together,” Soco began, “they have big eat down by lake where fire burn all time.”

Hungerford had been told by an aged native at the mission that apes could not make a fire, but often

94

when they found one in the forest where some camper had left it, they would continue to pile dry wood upon it and keep it burning indefinitely. He had also been told that they were as careful with fire as a boy scout, rarely permitting it to spread into the forest.

Hasty preparations were made for the trip. At four o’clock the small party, consisting of Hungerford, Rimpano, Soco, and four native porters, set out along a little trail for the lake three miles away. Here, according to Soco, ape folks would celebrate at night. Just why they would come to this particular spot, instead of celebrating nearer their homes in the deep forest, no one knew; or at least no one would tell. All questions on this point made to Soco received but a grunt for an answer, and seemed to trouble him mysteriously. Once, after being pressed for an answer, he scratched his head and replied:

“Apes have good reason.”

Hungerford wondered at Soco’s strange secretiveness about the apes. He would have forced him to answer, but he was afraid of losing his only chance of learning of Hilda and her tribe. Furthermore, according to Rimpano, Soco had actually participated in the ape celebrations, and knew all about them.

The trip was long but not uninteresting. Soco seemed to speak the language of the forest; the bending

95

of a twig, the scream of a bird, the position of the moss on the trees—all told him a story. Once when he made what appeared to be an unnecessary detour, and was asked why he did it, he took Hungerford by the hand, led him to one side, and, pointing to a huge log attached to a long grass cover, and suspended with a sharp point downwards above the trail, said:

“You’ m see that big elephant walk over rope, down come big tree, stick him in neck and heap kill!”

“How did you chance to see that?” asked Hungerford.

“Me use eyes!” the native replied.

Hungerford accepted his rebuke without questioning Soco further, but continued to follow this nature-man through the forest. Finally they came upon a most beautiful plot of ground at the edge of a small lake. Gray moss trailed like long bridal veils from the low branches of the trees. Soco, grinning and looking mysterious, gave the sign to halt.

“There,” he said, pointing toward a circular clearing, “them soon come to dance and eat. If us make no noise, them no care we see,” he explained, with strange gestures of the face, as if it were a most solemn occasion.

Hungerford climbed upon the branch of a large fallen mimosa tree, and seated himself where he could

96

get a good view of the clearing. Soco climbed up and sat near him, while Rimpano and the other men were lying around on the ground below, smoking their pipes, ready to do anything for “white man with heap tobac!”

Soco arose, uttered a peculiar “S-s-sh!” that sounded like the hissing of a snake, and, bending back the branch of a palm which obstructed the vision, gazed toward the clearing. The moon was just beginning to peep into the charmed place. The edges were lined with deep ferns and the earth was covered with a soft, green moss. Hungerford could discern dark figures silently moving around; they were the apes gathering for the celebration. In one corner of the circle was a smouldering fire left by some camper. The apes began immediately to heap brush and leaves upon it, and in a few moments a red, glaring flame illuminated the place.

A number of the females were busy raking the leaves from around the fire to prevent its spreading into the forest. But Hungerford’s mind was too occupied with thoughts of what they would do and of Hilda’s probable appearance to concern itself with the fire. The creatures grouped themselves about the glaring flames like savages around a council ring, chattering as vociferously as a group of politicians before an election. Several of the huge and ferocious

97

males, with enormous teeth, prominent jaws, and red, leary eyes, differing in all ways from Hilda's, seemed to rule the affair. A number of the smaller apes climbed to the overhanging branches of a nearby tree, as if to get a better view of the proceedings. Suddenly a great howling and screaming began, and there appeared an aged ape, bent with years and walking with the aid of a huge, gnarled stick.

"Him big chief," Soco whispered. "Now they all get quiet!"

Hungerford hoped that Hilda might yet appear, but she did not.

Soco was right, for a silence fell upon them, as if they had suddenly been struck dumb. Following closely behind the old king ape came the witch doctor and several other monstrous beasts in behind him, walking upright and each carrying a stick or club. Their arms were so enormous that they might well have used them for clubs.

The aged ruler stood up, trembling as though with ague, gave a signal by waving his hand and uttering something in a deep, bass voice. An air of suppressed silence invaded all. Again the old chief waved his hands up and down, as if he were directing a band, and all began to beat the ground with their hands as they uttered weird, guttural sounds which were more like the howling of wolves than music. For several

98

minutes the strange, dull, thud-like sounds with the accompanying howls continued.

Then the aged ruler, by a wave of the hand, restored silence. But it was immediately broken by a most unearthly scream which came from one of the hairy monsters, and he was answered by another who, roaring with anger, faced him in the center of the ring. The apes quickly got out of their way as they began fighting, like two drunken savages. Clinching and biting, they twisted their huge arms around each other, and finally fell upon the ground, tumbled over and over, while their kinsmen chattered and screamed like madmen. When it was evident that the disobedient one was about whipped, several joined in the fight. Soon the bleeding and crippled monster, with an uncannily human face, hobbled out of the circle, and followed by a female who led one baby by the hand and carried another on her back, departed for the woods.

"That what them always do," Soco said. "Him no obey big chief. Him get whipped by all. Big chief no let others boss." Evidently the poor beast had disobeyed some law of the king, for which the others had punished

him. It seems that even the death penalty among them is not uncommon for disobedience to the law of their tribe.

Desirous of learning from Soco something of the

99

apes' ingenious system of signals, scouts and pickets, Hungerford ventured to ask:

"What if they knew we were watching them?"

Soco grinned as though his mouth would split, and trying to suppress a chuckle pointed to a dark object, crouching on a branch above not twenty feet away.

"Him know all you'm do! Him follow you here! Him smart just like witch doctor."

The sight of the monstrous beast with glaring, venomous eyes almost unnerved Hungerford, and he shuddered at the thought of danger, while Soco assuringly declared:

"Him no hurt you'm if you'm no hurt him. Ape folk no fool. They know without talk what us do."

Strange as it all seemed to Hungerford, he knew what Soco said was believed by most Africans to be true.

The apes had again entered into a babble of chattering hushed only as the old king arose and, holding high what appeared to be a wreath of moss and dry leaves, jabbered at great length. At regular intervals the apes would join in, as if they were enacting some form of ceremony. Suddenly they all began to form themselves into two parallel lines directly facing the king. For the first time Hungerford observed that each carried something in his hand.

To the accompaniment of a low, guttural chant,

100

which was led apparently by one of the tribe concealed in the top branches of a nearby tree, they marched by the king in twos, one to his right, the other to his left, depositing gifts of fruits and nuts at his feet. When the march was over, the females hastily gathered around the fire and busied themselves hurling sand and dirt over its smouldering flames. This being done, they formed in a single line, led by two of their largest members, with three on each side as scouts. The aged king brought up the rear followed by two of the younger members carrying the fruits and nuts which had been

given to him. Silently they marched away through the dense forest toward their home.

The hour was late, but the moon shone brightly, and the strangeness and mystery of the whole thing greatly impressed Hungerford. All the natives were asleep except Soco, who loudly shouted in his own language that the white man had “much tobac” to give out. This acted as a charm and gradually awakened them from their slumbers.

Hungerford wondered at the strangeness of it all. There were a thousand queries that danced through his mind. Were these really Hilda’s people? Where had they learned to rekindle a fire? Why had they come so far from their homes? What was the meaning of all the strange ceremony ... the wreath, the

101

battle between the two apes, the scout in the trees? Why did the bride and groom not appear? And where was Hilda? He could only see the situation, but not offer a solution. Hungerford felt that he had at last learned a few interesting things of the apes; but he also knew that he would never know much of their tribal customs. He wondered why they brought the food and did not eat it.

By this time the party was well on its way down the trail for home, when Hungerford happened casually to glance toward a tall acacia tree, towering high above the others, so that its outline was well defined in the moonlight; there he noticed a large ape hut near the top of the tree. Naturally he pointed it out to the rest of the party. Quick as a flash of lightning the men halted, sank to the earth on their knees, began jabbering among themselves, and in a few moments had conceived a plan of action. Its execution was so perfectly and quickly carried out that Hungerford stood amazed. In less than a minute two of them began to scale the tree, while the others remained on the ground, eagerly shouting and waving their hands. Soco and Rimpano seemed excited, while Hungerford stood spellbound at what was happening.

Finally, when the two climbers reached the entrance to the hut, they peeped in and shouted something to Soco, then began quickly to descend.

102

“What does it all mean?” Hungerford asked.

“Heap old sick ape—she die in bed. She no able go with her people. Every day them come bring koola nuts for her eat. She no able walk. Leopards get her if she come to ground.”

At this moment a huge ape sprang acrobatically from branch to branch of an adjoining tree and, growling to himself, hurried away in the forest.

“Him big ape what you’m see in tree by us,” Rimpano added. “Him bring heap koola nuts to sick ape from big dance.”

By this time the two men came down from the tree, and were excitedly talking in their own language to the little group. Soco explained to Hungerford that they had seen a great aged female ape who, because of illness, had been left to die in her lone tree-top house. Hungerford knew that it was a custom of the apes when they were forced to leave a certain hunting ground, because of either scarcity of food or the danger of enemies, to leave all who were not able to follow the tribe in their lone hut in the tree tops. For them to attempt to carry their invalids through the forest, where the leopards and great snakes were so plentiful, would mean gradual annihilation of the entire tribe. When they were left behind, their closest relatives would return and feed them, as long as the tribe lived near enough for this to be

103

possible. Devotion among them was very great, and often, as in human families, they sacrificed themselves for their loved ones.

Perhaps this aged female belonged to the royal family! She might be related to Hilda, even be Hilda’s grandmother! Her presence there might explain why the apes had come so near this place to celebrate.

“We-oo-h! We-oo-h!” came in weird tones from the ape house in the tree. With yells and screams the four guides darted away like ghosts. For yards away Hungerford could hear the rattling of the underbrush. Rimpano trembled with fright and walked closer to Hungerford, while Soco grabbed up dirt from the earth and heaped it upon his head. A deep gurgling sound came from the tree-top. It sounded like someone struggling in death, and Soco, with eyes almost popping out, explained in whispers:

“Old ape in tree die now—ghost will follow us all home. No let us sleep. Witch doctor say us must no let ghost catch us!”

After a long and wearisome trip, at a late hour, Hungerford arrived at the stockade. There he found the guides, though still trembling with fear, not too frightened from the ghost to demand their pay at once.

He paid them, although they had not found Hilda. It had all been worth while—the long, tedious trip,

104

the return in the night—and Hungerford felt that he had learned much about the rites and customs of Hilda's people, especially strange being the fact that Salaema, the witch doctor visited with them.

105

CHAPTER XIII.

THE POST'S NEW INTEREST

CAPTAIN Norton, his wife, and Lady Cornelia reached Rambunda a day later than they had expected. Hungerford had gone to the Post to meet them, only to be obliged to return again the next day. The last stage of their journey had to be made in rude native canoes, dugouts constructed from hollowed giant logs. It was nearly nightfall when the missionary, chatting at the landing place with Colonel Trevor, saw the boats coming up the river. In the leading one sat the three passengers. The remaining canoes were laden with luggage and the native guides and porters, who were to take Captain Jennings back with them.

Hungerford's eyes alighted at once upon Lady Cornelia sitting in the bow, her athletic figure clad in serviceable and becoming khaki. She spied him among the crowd upon the bank, and with an eager wave of the hand called joyfully to him in her deep, musical voice. Captain Norton also hailed him, and Lady Evelyn lifted a slender hand in half-hearted greeting.

When the canoe had touched the bank, Lady Cornelia

106

sprang out before anyone could offer assistance. Putting both hands upon Hungerford's shoulders, she gave him a mannish little shake of frank affection, and exclaimed:

"Chester, you're a sight for sore eyes! I could kiss you! And I could kiss these officers who were responsible for sending Art and, incidentally, me here, even though Evelyn does curse the day that witnessed our departure from Nairobi."

"Oh, Chester, it's been the most *hideous* trip!" interrupted Lady Evelyn, who with her husband had been receiving the official greetings of Colonel Trevor.

Gentle, maternal Mrs. Hoskins stood near, the Major, awaiting a chance to speak to them, and every white man in the place had come out to give them welcome, while most of the native population hovered in the background, staring curiously at the white women. Most of them had seen

only one or two English women in their lives. These two were well worth seeing, even in parts of the world where there were many of their sisters.

Lady Cornelia was the type that is called statuesque; she carried not an ounce of superfluous flesh. She was as lithe as a lioness, and the tawny shade of her hair, as well as her graceful regal bearing, had sometimes led Hungerford to think of the comparison.

107

Her features were clear-cut and superbly patrician. Evelyn was not unlike her, but more girlish, smaller, with more delicate coloring. She was pure blonde, with corn-colored hair and wide-open blue eyes; while those of Lady Cornelia were curiously indeterminate in color—agate eyes of brown and gold and red and green in shifting lights.

“I hope you are going to find it endurable here,” Colonel Trevor said to the wife of his new Captain. “It’s rather a monotonous place, but one becomes accustomed to it eventually.”

She looked at the few unattractive brick stores and army buildings, the half dozen bungalows, all clustered together within a few hundred yards of the river’s edge, with the native village in the distance surrounded by its teakwood stockade, and she shivered at the thought that this was to be her home. But with an attempt at a smile she said:

“It doesn’t look very promising, I must confess. But we’ve had such primitive accommodations on the way up here that now I’m disposed to hail the sight of even one weatherproof building with enthusiasm. Chester, you can’t imagine—but I suppose you can too, as you must have come the same way—how shaken one feels. We’ve been riding in hammocks most of the time since we left Entebbe; at least Cornelia and I have. Poor Art walked. I dare

108

say we were lucky to have had the natives to carry us. Imagine three days through jungle trails swung along in those hammocks, and the mosquitoes almost eating us up in spite of the nets; they get under them, you know! Well, of course you know! And camping at night in those dreadful rest-houses, full of spiders and ticks and fleas and all kinds of creeping things—and once we found a scorpion. They tell me the servants go barefooted and shake the house when they walk. Our major-domo was a perfect nuisance with the canoes. His creaky boots screeched as he walked, and he said he

did not like them unless they ‘talkee good.’ He’d be a nuisance in one of these rest-houses. I think it’s a mistake to call them rest-houses, for really, Colonel, I didn’t rest at all in them.”

Hungerford’s good-humored laughter did not strike her as sympathetic. “You’ll get used to all those things after you’ve roughed it awhile here,” he affirmed.

“I hope I shall never have to get used to such days and nights as these last have been,” she returned. “Last night we had to camp right out in the open. And all of today we’ve been on the river in those top-heavy canoes. I was afraid all night that we should be devoured by lions, and all day that the crocodiles would attack our boat. I haven’t had a night’s sleep since we left Entebbe. I was advised

109

not to bring a maid, as they are sure to get married or die almost as soon as they arrive. Why *do* you have army posts at such outrageous places, Colonel Trevor?”

Lady Cornelia, who had been talking with easy friendliness to some of the others, had overheard most of her sister’s lament. Turning, she saved the Colonel the necessity of answering this question by explaining vigorously:

“Evelyn, you ungrateful wretch! I should think you’d be immensely pleased to have the chance of making this trip. I’m wild about it myself. But then, you never were a good sport. Was she Chester?”

Colonel Trevor was thinking, “I’m afraid that’s true. She’s going to suffer here for fair, if that’s the type she is. Pretty, but she should never be allowed outside of an European drawing-room or a formal garden. But the other woman is—*splendid!*”

“It always seems worse at first,” the impressionable Telford declared consolingly. “You’ll like it better when you get settled here and come to know us. You’ll find us all your willing slaves. And anything I can do to make things agreeable for you, you may be sure I’ll do it with all the pleasure in the world.”

“Beginning to get in some of your deadly work already, Telford?” laughed the Major, as Lady Evelyn

110

colored slightly and gave the Lieutenant a faint smile. She was very much in love with her husband, but that did not prevent her appreciation of other men's tributes—especially when they were young and good-looking.

"I suppose all of you think I'm very impolite to your Post," she faltered. "But I'm so tired and nervous and dirty and hot that I don't half know what I'm talking about. And it's all so new and strange that I'm still just a little bit *terrified*." Her voice rose unconsciously on the last word, and she was not far from tears.

Captain Norton, who had been regarding Telford with a somewhat cold stare, now looked anxiously at his wife. Still new to the ways of women, he was fearful of an attack of nerves. But Mrs. Hoskins put a motherly arm around her shoulders and said:

"I know exactly how you feel, my dear. I had the same rather hopeless, lost feeling when I first came here. Almost any woman would. Your sister is wonderful, but few of us, I'm afraid, could adapt ourselves to such a different existence as beautifully as she seems to. It won't be bad when the strangeness has worn off. I've been here three years, and I know." She smiled a patient, encouraging smile, which to the careless listeners revealed none of the heartache for home and friends that lay behind the last simple statement.

111

"We did everything we could to get your house ready. I took the liberty of giving instructions to the servants that Colonel Trevor engaged, for these Africans are not always easy to manage when you don't know their ways, and I thought I'd better break them in for you. I think you'll find everything for your immediate needs in the bungalow. It hasn't been occupied for some time. Captain Jennings is a bachelor, you know, and has been living in the barracks."

"It was sweet of you to think of things and do so much," the young wife replied, her eyes filling and her lips trembling like those of a child. "I can't tell you how grateful I am."

Hungerford, who had been talking to Lady Cornelia, now remembering the lateness of the hour and the fatigue of the travelers, prepared to take his leave after inviting the three to tea at his place on the morrow. "I've asked Colonel Trevor to bring you," he explained, "and then we can have a good long comparison of adventures."

“That will be corking,” responded Lady Cornelia. “I can hardly wait to see your place. Evelyn will be all right after a bath and a decent night’s rest, I’m sure. As for me, I’m always all right, you know; disgustingly healthy! But just now I do feel the need of a tub and a change of clothes.”

112

An hour later Lady Cornelia, having had her bath, was unpacking her belongings to her own cheerily whistled accompaniment of, “When The Right Girl Comes Along,” while her sister, in grateful response to the soothing effects of soap and water, had already retired, with a little wail of mingled thankfulness for the bed and dismay at finding the Post even less inviting than anything she had expected.

113

CHAPTER XIV.

INCREASED PROBLEMS

THE tea-table was set in the stockade beneath the tamarind tree, which was now a mass of brilliant, orange-petaled blooms. Every preparation that could be made for the important occasion had been completed, and Hungerford was ready and waiting for his guests before the appointed time.

Rimpano had been persuaded to don his one pair of trousers, but had firmly refused to add a shirt or coat. Thus he remained true to the African style!

When the quartette arrived both women were as scrupulously and charmingly arrayed as if the tea-party had been an affair at Windsor or Richmond. Lady Cornelia could not wait to be shown about the place. She wanted to see even Rimpano's cook-shed. Her sister, too, was more optimistic and interested in the surroundings than she had been on the previous day.

"I simply adore this place, Chester," Lady Cornelia announced as Rimpano brought in the tea-tray with all the majesty and poise of a British butler, the effect only slightly marred by his incomplete uniform and

114

thick-lipped, widespread grin. "And your black man is a perfect duck—just like those you read of. But where are your monkey footmen and parlor maids that you wrote me about? I expected to see them standing about in powdered wigs and lace caps and aprons, armed with card trays and feather dusters. How could you deceive and disappoint me so?"

Hungerford forced a smile, though he was still unable, when reminded of Hilda, to greet the subject lightly.

"I'm afraid you must blame your imagination, instead of me, if you feel that you've been cheated," he said. "I did write you about the ape, Hilda, and her two brothers I mentioned. Both died. Hilda was really more of a friend and companion than a servant. To me she was not like an animal. You've no idea what a mind she had—so different from these low savages that I have to mingle with; she was really a comfort to me in this lonely

place.... That's still a sore subject, for she has left me, and I'm afraid she is never coming back."

"What! Do you mean to say that Hilda, the Super-Ape, has gone off again?" Colonel Trevor inquired.

"Yes, she disappeared over a week ago; for what reason, I don't know. She had seemed perfectly happy here, up to the very evening that she left."

115

"Well, I'm not much surprised," returned the Colonel. "That's the animal of it. Of course she's gone back to her kind, where she belongs. It's really just as well, if you ask me. You were becoming morbidly interested in the creature. Now you'll have much more fascinating company. I must admit, though," he addressed the newcomers now, "that for a monkey she was exceptionally clever."

"I've told you that she *wasn't* a monkey," Hungerford almost snapped in reply.

Colonel Trevor raised his eyebrows slightly and looked at the others with a quizzical smile. Lady Cornelia, who at Hungerford's invitation, was playing hostess, looked up in the midst of pouring the Colonel's tea and said:

"Well, tell us more about this 'rara avis,' Chester; or, I suppose I should say 'rara simia'!"

"It's difficult to give you any right idea of her," Hungerford answered. "You'd have to know her as I did to understand her charm. Yes, charm is the word," he finished rather hotly, as a derisive laugh from Colonel Trevor greeted his description. "She was indescribable, with her really human mind and her quaint, pretty ways...."

At this point he noticed that Lady Cornelia was no longer paying attention, but was sitting with the teapot

116

poised in her hand, arrested in the very act of pouring, her eyes riveted upon the stockade entrance, which she was facing. He turned to see what it was, and the others also seemed drawn at the same instant to follow the direction of the hypnotized gaze. There stood Hilda in the gateway, against the background of the mangrove-bordered river. She wore a girdle of flowers about her waist, from which hung long strands of gray moss forming a skirt that suggested those worn by Hawaiian dancing girls.

Around her neck was still the wreath, now withered, which she had made and Hungerford had put there.

She was not alone. Behind her, a little distance in the rear, stood a half dozen huge apes. All of them were black, except the foremost one, who presented an appearance more surprising, if possible, than Hilda herself. Bowed with age, white-bearded and leaning upon a gnarled stick, he was a very patriarch of apes, rusty brown in color, with a face as shriveled as a raisin—grotesquely attractive! Hungerford recognized him at a glance as the aged Chief of the tribe whom he had seen at the ape festival in the forest where Soco had carried him to see the apes celebrate.

For an instant the group at the tea-table was shocked into immobility. Then Lady Evelyn made a convulsive movement and clapped her hands to her mouth to stifle the scream that she had unconsciously

117

uttered. Rimpano, returning at this moment from the cook-shed with a plate of muffins, stopped short when he saw the apes, then burst into uproarious laughter. Swinging his torso back with convulsive mirth, he pointed a mocking finger at his master.

“Uh-hu-h-uh! That what me thought!” he exclaimed. This cryptic but boisterous utterance seemed to break the statue-like silence of the ape group. His wild laughter galvanized Hilda into action. Before Hungerford could grasp the meaning of the servant’s strange behavior, the white ape had turned to her people, and with a fierce imperious gesture, waved them off. They obeyed, though evidently with reluctance, and disappeared from view, re-entering the jungle from whence they had so silently come.

Then, with a single leap, Hilda sprang into the stockade and made for the tea-table. Wrenching from Lady Cornelia’s grasp, the teapot which she was still absently holding, Hilda clutched it closely with both hands, by handle and spout, and, backing away a few paces, glared defiantly at the others.

All sprang to their feet. Lady Cornelia had remained outwardly cool, but there was bewilderment in the look which she still fastened upon the ape, and her face had grown a little white. Rimpano’s laughter had ceased abruptly.

118

Hungerford was the first to recover speech. "Why, Hilda! What does this mean? This is a pretty homecoming! I am ashamed of you!" He spoke sharply, as to a child guilty of outrageous conduct.

Hilda made no move save to turn her glittering eyes from Lady Cornelia's face to his. Then she grunted, still defiant:

"Me po!"

Hungerford could not restrain a laugh. "That's so; you always did pour the tea. Didn't you, Hilda? But that is no way to act in company. You know better than that. You must beg the lady's pardon ..." He turned to the others: "Don't be afraid. Hilda wouldn't hurt any of you. She just had a little fit of temperament, evidently. And she's sorry. Aren't you, Hilda? She wants to apologize very humbly to our guests. She didn't quite understand."

But it was Hungerford who did not quite understand!

"Well, if this is your perfectly trained monkey companion, I'll admit that she's most remarkable—though not for gentleness." Lady Cornelia's laugh was a trifle shaky as she resumed her seat and inspected the still red marks of Hilda's fingers upon her hand.

The others followed her lead and reseated themselves somewhat uncertainly. Hilda stood at bay, resolutely

119

gripping the teapot. So far as Lady Cornelia could see, she showed no disposition whatever to apologize!

"I think her speaking startled me more than her grabbing the teapot. How did you ever teach her to say things? I feel as if she could understand what I say too. It's really amazing!" Lady Cornelia was talking to ease the strain of the situation rather than because she particularly desired to say anything. "But I'm not sure that I like her. She is *too* human! I can't express it; but if you were married, I am sure your wife would never tolerate you having such a weird being around the place. *I* certainly shouldn't. She gives me mental nausea—the way she keeps looking at me. Send her away, Chester!"

Uttering a shrill sound of anger, Hilda suddenly hurled the teapot at the head of Lady Cornelia. Fortunately it missed its mark, and just glazed her chin, but the hot tea poured down the front of her gown. She was only slightly burned, but her dress was ruined, and she was justly indignant.

For a moment after the assault Hilda was forgotten in the attention which centered upon Lady Cornelia. Then the ape leapt to the table, and

snatching up one dish after another, dashed them against the posts of the stockade wall and the broad trunk of the tamarind, smashing everything into bits, and finally

120

tearing the cloth from the table. She was ripping it into shreds when Rimpano rushed at her in a frenzy which scarcely fell short of her own. He caught her and would have shaken her, but she twisted herself free and began fighting him furiously. In their struggle the moss and flowers with which she had so strangely decked herself were torn off, and the dried wreath about her neck was pulled to pieces.

Hungerford was so shocked at the whole thing that at first he was unable to act. Then, recovering himself, he tried to separate them.

On realizing the absurd situation, there became a disquieting mixture in Hilda's mind of shame and anger. And at this intervention she shrank away from Hungerford, like a whipped dog, and suddenly her expression changed from one of ferocity to that of an utterly woebegone, grief-stricken attitude. He could not understand it at all, and wondered if it indicated a sudden capricious remorse. But it seemed to hold something far deeper than that, something that perhaps had to do with her race history or family customs.

Then in a flash she darted to the gate, and was gone from the stockade. When he ran after her she was nowhere to be seen in the clearing. Evidently she had plunged at once into the jungle.

Worried and hopelessly puzzled he went back to

121

the others. Hilda's behavior had been incredible. He was bitterly humiliated to have his protégée so belie his description of her. And he was deeply concerned about Lady Cornelia. She would hold him responsible; and perhaps never forgive him.

He was trying to apologize to her, feeling that anything he could say was wholly inadequate, when he became aware of a jabbering and grumbling issuing from the woods. Instantly the idea seized him that the disturbance came from Hilda's companions. It suggested that they were all coming back, and in view of what had just occurred he was alarmed. But the others had no more than exchanged glances when the sounds began to grow

fainter, and the apes were retreating. Soon the noise died away in the distance.

Lady Cornelia took the experience in a much better spirit than Hungerford could have hoped for. Her anger had had time to cool now, and the chief damage had been to her clothes. Any woman might have been pardoned for openly resenting the ruining of an entirely new and very lovely frock, particularly when she had only a limited amount of luggage with her and was so far away from a base of supplies. But Hungerford was so abject about the whole unhappy episode and had taken the blame so much upon himself that she would not dwell upon it; after all the fault was not his.

122

“I can’t understand it,” he repeated. “I suppose she was jealous of your being here. She has never seen a woman here before, that is a white woman, and was probably angered at the thought that someone had taken her place. Her whole tribe seem to have been offended in some way; their growling was terrible when she ran back to them. But I couldn’t have conceived of her acting in that manner in any case, for heretofore she has always been so gentle and affectionate toward both Rimpano and me.”

Captain Norton gave a laugh that would have awakened the “Seven Sisters”—more resembling a snort. “Yes, I remember your speaking of her ‘quaint, pretty ways’!”

“If that was a specimen of them, I prefer some less ‘quaint’ and more conventional,” Lady Cornelia said. “Why haven’t you taught her that at home we don’t consider it good form to behave so ... demonstratively at a tea party? It wasn’t exactly my definition of ‘charm’!”

“It is sporting of you to take it in this way,” he declared gratefully. “I was afraid you would never forgive me.... Now Rimpano will make some fresh tea, and we’ll try to forget all this.”

“Of course, I forgive you,” she answered him. “*You* couldn’t help it. But never mind about the tea

123

now. We can’t stay any later. It will soon be dark. And I want to get home and change this for something that is less of a tea-gown!” She glanced down ruefully at the stained crepe de Chine. Then she gave him her hand

and said with gracious mockery, "Such a charming party, Chester! ... Come and see us very soon, won't you?"

"Well, old man," Colonel Trevor remarked tactlessly, "I hope this has taught you a lesson. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.... See what I mean? Eh?"

Lady Evelyn said nothing. Extending a limp hand to her host, she preserved a discreet silence. She was by no means sure that, if she opened her mouth at all at the moment, she would not give way to a fit of violent hysterics, and express in unqualified terms her loathing of Africa.

CHAPTER XV.

A DISCUSSION

DURING the week that followed, Hungerford saw his friends several times. Then he was invited to dinner by Lady Evelyn, who was doing her best to adjust herself to the new life.

Every officer in the Post had been invited, and it “ was Rambunda’s nearest approach to a formal dinner. With three women present, young Telford was thinking, when they were seated around the flower-decked, candle-shaded table, that for once it was not such a bad imitation of home.

Afterwards, over coffee on the verandah, the conversation turned on the lives and habits of the natives. Lady Cornelia had begun it by asking a question about one of Hungerford’s female converts who had died in childbirth the previous day, and the missionary had expressed the opinion that she was infinitely better off.

“Why do you say that?” Lady Evelyn inquired.

“My dear Evelyn,” he returned, “you can’t conceive of the degraded position of these wretched

125

women. They drag through lives of unspeakable slavery and submission to the men who marry them; and this one was no exception to the rule.”

“But I thought all that was being changed since they are becoming Christians and learning civilized ways,” she protested. “That’s why we have the missions.”

“Civilized!” Hungerford gave a short laugh. “They don’t know the meaning of the word. I have tried in every way in my power to improve their conditions here, but I sometimes feel that I’m accomplishing nothing at all. The men resent any interference with their women—their brutish minds are able to attribute it to only one motive.”

“That’s all correct,” agreed Major Hoskins, “their women-folk have absolutely nothing to live for. Those who are not converted have no hopes for the future, either here or hereafter. And in many cases their husbands would kill them if they professed conversion.”

Lady Evelyn made an indignant exclamation and asked:

“But don’t some of the *men* become converted?”

Lady Cornelia set down her coffee cup and, opening her cigarette case, extracted a Pall Mall. While the observant Telford struck a light for her she

126

passed the case to her sister. Mrs. Hoskins did not smoke.

“Oh, yes.” It was Colonel Trevor who answered the last question with cynical amusement. “They call it conversion when they condescend to attend the services and accept the missionaries’ gifts of cloth, food and firearms. But that doesn’t alter their domestic arrangements in the least. How about it, Hungerford?”

“It’s unfortunately so,” Hungerford admitted. “That’s the discouraging part about it. One can see little sign of any progress, even among those who are supposed to be won over. I think the greatest hindrance to their advancement is this depraving polygamy ... and yet, while it’s at the bottom of the women’s misery, it seems paradoxically to be their one relief at present. The more women in a man’s household, the more there are to share the drudgery and the child-bearing. The keeping of countless wives seems to stir little jealousy among them. Most of them work side by side, quite stolidly, waiting upon their lord and master, who lolls in idleness.”

Lady Cornelia blew contemplative smoke rings. “Heaven help any husband of mine who attempted that sort of barbarism!” she said grimly. “I’d order him shot at sunrise!”

127

Everyone laughed, but Hungerford’s mind was too obsessed with the real tragedy of the women’s sordid existence to take it lightly. “You can’t picture it at all,” he said gravely. “And thank God you can’t! I oughtn’t even try to tell you.”

“Yes, I want to know about them,” she demanded. “They call hardly be much more oppressed than the peasant women in Europe.”

“Those peasant women are independent beings beside them, Lady Cornelia,” the Colonel told her. “Those polygamous marriages are literally the beginning and the end of the native woman’s existence here. Why, often they are married before the age of ten!”

“And among some of the tribes the marriage is frequently arranged even before the birth of the girl,” put in the Major. “A custom exists among them

of selling their female offspring before they even come into the world. The aspiring husband deposits with the father the sum required, and—”

“Edward!” protested Mrs. Hoskins. “Don’t you think we had better talk about something else...?”

“Oh, I want to get the facts, Mrs. Hoskins,” Lady Cornelia insisted. “Now tell us all about those prenatal marriage contracts, Major Hoskins, please. You were saying...?”

128

“Why, simply that from the day of birth the child, if a girl, is the sole property of her prospective husband. If a boy is born instead, the fee is returned, and probably offered at once to the head of a family where there is another expectant mother.”

“Tell them what you saw yesterday morning, Sanderson,” suggested Colonel Trevor.

“Oh, yes, rotten spectacle,” responded Lieutenant Sanderson, the young officer whose wife had remained in England. “I had occasion to go to the native quarter, where I saw some of them holding a sort of auction. As I didn’t take in its meaning, I asked one of them about it. Well ... he explained right enough! Pointing to a big beastly-looking black with a face like a gorilla’s, he said in his funny lingo, ‘Him pay fife beads for baby not yet born, if she girl. She make him wife some day. She cost, just like cow, fife beads.’ Well, I’d heard that they did that sort of thing, but that’s the first time I’d been right there and seen the transaction with my own eyes. It made me want to use a cowhide on him, the blighter!”

“And that’s such a common occurrence that it’s accepted as a matter of course by all of them,” supplemented Hungerford with disgust. “Five beads is a good price to pay for an unborn wife. She seldom brings more than three, unless of a very good family.”

129

“Oh, Chester! How can you jest about such things?” Lady Evelyn reproved him with a frown.

“But I’m not jesting, I assure you. Nothing was further from my intention. It’s hideous, but it’s likewise a simple fact. A cow nearly always brings at least ten beads, and even a goat often sells for more than a wife. The price varies according to the tribe, the number of girls on the market, the wealth of the groom and other considerations.”

“I once knew of a bridegroom paying as high as sixty goats for the belle of a tribe,” the Colonel informed them; “but that was not around here.”

“At any rate, if girls are profitable in this country, I should think there must be no lamentation here when daughters are born instead of sons,” said Lady Cornelia.

“You are right,” answered the Major. “Girls here have always some commercial value, even if they are at times placed upon a bargain counter. A man with many daughters is a man of potential wealth. And until they are sold they are good servants.”

“How many wives may a man have here?” queried Captain Norton.

“Art, that shouldn’t be a matter of any interest to you; those rules apply only to the natives!” interposed his sister-in-law, with mock severity.

130

Major Hoskins smiled. “There’s no limit to the number owned by the wealthier blacks. In fact, the more a man can afford to purchase, the greater is his standing. A native Rothschild might own a tribe! The Chief of one tribe near here does possess nearly three hundred partners of his sorrows.”

“I dare say he reserves his joys for himself?” hazarded Lady Cornelia.

“Exactly. He lounges, smokes and visits the other men, or gorges himself like a boa-constrictor, while the wives go to work in the garden patches, at the mill, or about the huts. And generally each has a baby to take care of. They often carry them on their backs all day while they do their work. Well, no doubt you’ve seen some of those things yourself, even in the short time that you’ve been here. When they’re on the march, they carry not only their children but all the household goods, and sometimes even take turns carrying the husband, if he thinks he’s tired. When camp is pitched, the women do all the work, while the men sit around and order them to hurry.”

“They ought to be strung up,” Lady Cornelia decided.

“And an old woman who has outgrown her usefulness,” the Major continued, “is often left behind to starve to death. Sometimes rations for a day or

131

two are left with her; but even before these are exhausted, the wild animals have probably made an end of her.”

“Oh, how fiendish!” came from Lady Evelyn. “But can’t they be taught the inhumanity of such things? Surely they must be able to *reason*.”

“They reason in their own way—and that is to do, of course, what their people have always done. You must remember that they don’t know anything else. This treatment is taken for granted as the natural thing, even by the women themselves.”

“I once asked a native who had only eight wives why he couldn’t content himself with one,” said Hungerford, “and he asked me, with a good deal of wonder, who then would work for him when she was sick. Another time I saw a frail native woman carrying her strapping husband on her back through a dangerous ford in the river. When I raised a protest he wanted to know whose wife should carry him over, if not one of his own? You see, from his point of view, I was simply unreasonable.”

“Really, Chester, it makes my blood boil to hear such things,” declared Lady Cornelia. “I ought to be a missionary here for a little while. Either they’d make a nice rich cannibal’s soup out of me, or I’d soon have

132

them fearing my wrath more than that of the Lord. I’d go about with a cat-o’-nine-tails, and I’d use it!”

“But haven’t these men any natural, human affections?” asked Lady Evelyn curiously. “Don’t they have any love for their wives and children?”

“It doesn’t seem so,” Major Hoskins answered her. “They seem to have only the animals’ mating instinct. Once their children are born, they apparently take no interest in them—except to sell off the girls. There is nothing resembling home life among them. The wives live apart with their children, in huts they’ve built for themselves. At mealtime, those wives who have prepared the food stand by after serving it to their husband and watch him eat. If any food remains after he has finished eating, the children are anxiously waiting to snatch it. They get their food as they can, and run off and eat it by themselves, like little dogs. And the wives have to look out for their own dinner after the husband is entirely satisfied. So far from there being love in the families, I should say it was generally the reverse, Lady Evelyn. The wives nearly always detest their husband, and he knows it. As long as the women remain submissive and obedient to all commands he seems to care little what their inward feelings may be. But he takes no chances with their loyalty. A man often makes a wife taste in his presence

133

the food she has cooked for him, to satisfy him that she hasn't poisoned it."

"I've heard that they even rent their wives out," remarked Captain Norton. "But surely that isn't so?"

"Yes, it is so," returned the Major. "The wives are absolutely chattels. They are bought and sold at pleasure. Sometimes they are exchanged for a more desirable wife, and more often than not, cast out entirely if disease attacks them. If a man buys a young wife and doesn't find her to his liking, he may return her to her parents and get his money back. They will hope for better luck in the deal with their next customer."

"Oh, Major! Surely you are exaggerating now?" Lady Cornelia was incredulous.

"My dear Lady, indeed I am not. In fact in all of our remarks, I might even say that we have understated the case."

"That's right, Cornelia," Hungerford supported him. "It isn't even possible to tell you some of the facts concerning their habits. In their physical relations they are far beneath the animals. These miserable females are prepared from their earliest childhood to know what is ahead of them and to learn to submit unreservedly to the will of the males. Children, at the unbelievable ages of seven and eight, are

134

initiated into unspeakable lewdness by their elders, in the participation in certain games."

"What sort of games?" asked Lady Cornelia.

"Details are unmentionable."

"Well, you arouse my curiosity, Chester."

"Cornelia! ... I don't think I want to hear any more, Chester," was Lady Evelyn's decision. "You know I'm not in love with this place, anyway; and it doesn't add to my affection for it to hear all these monstrous things about the people, if they call them people."

"But, Chester, there's your black man," her sister argued. "He seems to be a thoroughly decent sort; harmless and very agreeable. Not at all the type you describe. There must be some good in them, and a degree of civilization in some of them."

"In a very few. But Rimpano is distinctly an exception," Hungerford explained. "To begin with, he comes from a coast tribe considerably more advanced than these. And then, since his childhood, he has been associated with white men. You can't judge these natives by him."

“I wonder that you’ve the pluck to stay here and go on working among them, as hopeless as they seem,” said Captain Norton.

“Sometimes I don’t think I have,” the missionary

135

returned, with a troubled look. “I’ve gotten something out of coming here—a great deal, in fact—but so far as I can see, I’ve done little good, if any. The blacks seem quite content to remain upon their present bestial level—seem to prefer it. Why, the apes are more admirable in their ways of living. They are moral, clean, sane in their habits, family-loving, generous and many other things that these savages are not.”

“He’s off again!” laughed Telford, “riding his pet hobby! Watch out that it doesn’t throw you, old chap. When you get on that steed there’s no checking your mad flights. You ride beyond the borders of reason.”

“No, I don’t.” Hungerford’s sober mood made him consider Telford’s badinage seriously. “I try to be entirely reasonable—I *want* to be. I’m not looking at the animal kingdom as already on the same plane as ours, as you seem to think I am, but only as having infinite possibilities. The ape is not a finality, but the ‘tadpole of an archangel’ as someone has put it.”

“Well, is not that equally true of the savage?” Captain Norton suggested.

“I suppose so. But in view of their handicaps, I really believe that the apes show greater responsiveness

136

to any help that is given them. At least I have found them more encouraging to work with.”

“I think, after our experience in that connection last week, perhaps we had better avoid discussion of the subject,” said Lady Cornelia. “There are too many present to support the opposition. It really wouldn’t be fair to you.” And she smiled with perhaps undue sweetness.

Major Hoskins moved uneasily, and glanced at his watch. “And it’s getting late.”

Hungerford took his cue gracefully. “As I’ve some little distance to go, I think I’d better be starting.”

“I’ll walk a bit of the way with you,” volunteered the Colonel. “It’s a fine night, and a stroll before turning in will do me good.”

The general movement of departure and goodnights which followed ended the discussion.

CHAPTER XVI.

HUNGERFORD'S PROPOSAL

HUNGERFORD found himself constantly thinking about Lady Cornelia. He came to the conclusion that he had not made plain to her just how much she was coming to mean to him. This was very much, and more and more eager he grew for rambles and talks with her. Then he might find out her attitude toward him.

She was past mistress in an art in which the most ingenuous of the feminine gender usually displays a peculiar aptitude, the art of concealing her feelings and intentions toward her admirers. Of course, she treated him with entire informality, and often freely showed her affection for him. But their long friendship could account for that.

He determined that at the first opportunity he would venture a tentative proposal. If she accepted, he would gladly marry her. He would regard her acceptance as a sign that this was the step he should take. If she refused—well, he would take that as a sign also; know that he had been mistaken, and not permit himself any vain repinings.

Had Hungerford been wholly in love with Lady

138

Cornelia he could never have adopted this philosophical attitude. He would have been agitated at the thought of asking her, tortured at the possibility of her refusal. He was just enough in love to be ready for marriage if Destiny cast the dice in that combination, and to be resigned if they fell otherwise.

It was simply a matter of her attraction having reached the “nth degree” in a primitive land where all that she stood for in life was so far away, where the paucity of feminine society had made her seem more desirable than ever before. The going of Hilda had taken from him the most vital interest in his life, had for the time being thwarted his scientific study of the apes. For his heart was not deeply in the mission work, faithful and conscientious in the execution of its duties though he was. He was now practically in the state of mind of the soldier on furlough, who is prepared

to fall a victim to the charms of the first maiden he meets, however disreputable she may be.

There was no disputing Lady Cornelia's charms. He wondered that she had remained single through so many seasons. Her position and popularity at home and in half the capitals of Europe were such that truly she could have had her choice among the eligibles of several countries. He had more than once heard her referred to as "not the marrying type of woman." But he felt that those who had so designated

139

her were mistaken. She was certainly not given to sentimentalism or flirtations; yet he thought that if she once gave her heart to a man, it would be for all time. And it seemed strange that, standing now upon the threshold of thirty, she should still be "heart-whole and fancy free."

Perhaps, indeed, she was not so. She did not suggest a woman who bore a blighted romance within her bosom. Yet she might be. For neither was she one to wear her heart upon her sleeve. Close as their friendship had been, he knew that she might carry such a secret to the day of her death without sharing it with anyone.

Now that he thought of it, he remembered gossipy old Sir Ramsey Smedes' once dropping the hint that she had loved a man who had met his death in the war. It might possibly be true. He had made up his mind sometime to lead gently up to the romance, if there had been one, and encourage her to tell it to him. His sense of humor did not sustain him to the point of seeing how droll was the idea of putting his transparent endeavors against her powers of penetration and evasion.

His opportunity came the very next day when he took her for a walk in the forest. They strolled casually down the tangled path, until she espied a snow-white butterfly orchid, perched on the base of an aged

140

palm tree. "Oh, Chester, isn't that gorgeous?" she exclaimed, and was in the act of picking it when Hungerford recognized a poisonous vine clinging about the palm.

"Yes, but be careful about that red-looking vine. Rimpano calls it 'devil-juice' and says that one drop of it would kill an elephant instantly!"

"Oh!" she murmured as she drew back from it. "It seems that death lurks in the jungle as much as on the battlefield."

This led to the opportunity he had been seeking. A few desultory remarks about the war seemed to make for him the desired opening.

“To be killed at the front is not the worst fate that could befall a man, though,” Hungerford ventured. “So many die as they have lived, in such a deadly miasma of pettiness. Didn’t Shaw say somewhere that the tragedy of life lay not in something tragic happening, but in nothing happening at all? We just dry up, or rust out—most of us.”

“Yes, I’ve often thought that,” she agreed slowly, but unemotionally. “Reggie’s death, for instance, was really the worthiest thing in his life. For the risk he took to save two men at the cost of his own life proved that he was capable of something fine and big—‘le beau geste’—when the chance came. I had never

141

given him credit for any strong qualities. But I had done him an injustice. If I had ever ‘loved and lost,’ I’d rather my man had been taken from me in the war than in any other way.”

Clearly there was no truth in the surmise of the old Baronet; or else she was a perfect actress, and an unnecessary falsifier. She would surely have told him of it, proudly, if Sir Ramsey had been right.

As another possibility occurred to him, he tried a different tack.

“Suppose you loved a man and found that he already had ties that claimed him? Do you think that you could willingly give him up then?”

She looked a trifle surprised. “Why, I had never thought about it. I’m not the sort of woman to allow myself to care very much for a man until I know just what his ties are ...” Then mischievously she countered, “I hope you’re not trying to confess something to me, Chester!”

Again he was evidently on the wrong track. But with the feeling that he was adroitly leading her on, he asked:

“Would it make any difference to you if I had such ties?”

She laughed heartily. “The idea of your having any

142

amorous entanglement is too delicious! I’d believe it as readily of Uncle Gregory—perhaps a little more readily! And I know you haven’t a wife.”

He could not make up his mind whether she had indirectly answered his question or not. So he repeated it, with the bluntness of a boy: “Tell me; would it?”

She became provocative: "Why should it make any difference to me what you did?"

"We don't seem to be getting anywhere," was his thought; and he voiced it aloud. Whereat she laughed still more heartily.

"Just where did you want to get?"

"I don't quite know myself," he floundered. "But I think.... Suppose I asked you to marry me, Cornelia?"

She drew in her breath with a quick little gasp; but what it meant he could not tell. It might have indicated surprise, triumph, or merely amusement. When she replied she spoke quite calmly:

"Are you proposing to me, Chester?"

"I fancy I am. Though I did only say 'suppose,' didn't I?"

"That's the Scotch in you," she cried merrily, "cannily leaving a loophole of escape in case you want to

143

draw back. It's very wise, but not quite gallant, is it?"

He made a deprecativè gesture. "You know that wasn't my meaning," he protested, taking her banter with a literalness that gave proof of the Scotch. "It depends upon *you*. I can scarcely hope that you'd have me."

She patted his arm, condescendingly. "Dear old dodo! ... Well, you're tremblingly hanging upon my answer then—is that it?" she mused. "Suppose I should tell you that I have been waiting, hoping, praying for this day—not because I loved you particularly, but because I was still English and Victorian enough to feel it a disgrace to die an old maid, and you were the first man who had asked me to marry him?"

Incredulity showed upon his face. "Surely not!" he exclaimed. "Why, I imagined you'd had scores of offers. I never dreamed ..." The sentence fell away uncompleted before his bewilderment.

Half smiling, half piqued, she mimicked him: "I only said *suppose*, didn't I?"

He caught her mockery, now that she had bludgeoned it home, and was vexed with himself. "Of course, you were joking. I'm not very clever, am I? ... But do give me an answer, Cornelia."

144

She was silent for some time. Reaching down she plucked the frond of a large fern and fanned herself with it. At length she turned to look at him

again, with the faintest hint of her smile remaining. “Well, Chester ... my answer is—‘Cherche et tu troaveras’!”

“You mean—find out. How can I do that if you won’t tell me, Cornelia?”

“I can’t tell you,” she said. “For I’m not sure how far love goes on either side. You may be able to find out for both of us—look at that queer animal over there!” She suddenly changed the subject by calling his attention to a pangolin which had come out of the underbrush a few yards away and was prowling among the leaves.

“I’ve seen them before,” he declared, slightly petulant. “I don’t want to talk about pangolins.”

“But I do,” she returned pleasantly. “I think they are most interesting creatures. And this is the first one I’ve seen outside of a zoo. Tell me all you know about them, Chester.... See, this one is searching for something, too. Perhaps he’ll help you find what you’re looking for.”

She would not permit the conversation to revert to the former intimate topic. Evidently she had had enough of sentimental colloquy for that day.

CHAPTER XVII.

HILDA'S SECRET SORROW

Part I

THAT evening Hungerford sat alone in the moonlight under the tamarind tree, thinking, thinking ... thinking of friends far away in England; now of Lady Cornelia, and of her evasive manner in replying to him in the morning; but above all of Hilda; of his long efforts to find out just how intelligent she was, and now of her shameful behavior toward his friend. He no longer cared that she had gone, for after all she was an *ape*, a creature of the jungle, an untamed animal. It was folly for him to attribute to her the feelings and understandings of even the lower type of human beings. If Hilda could not be depended upon, then surely none of her kind could, for he had believed her far in advance of the other animals. Yet, forgetting all that he had tried to do for her, she had gone off in the most ungrateful manner after her terrible conduct. Even a dog would not have done that! Now he did not blame anyone for ridiculing his ideas of the higher intelligence of

146

the apes; for after soberly reflecting upon Hilda's recent actions he was aghast at his own audacity.

Hungerford was almost dreaming, listening to the mysterious night sounds of the forest, when Rimpano came out of his shack and joined him. A couple of cigarettes made the African unusually loquacious; and Hungerford thought that this was a good time to draw him out on Hilda, to learn if possible the meaning of her sorrowful expression and her peculiar actions on the day of her departure.

"You remember, Rimpano, how strangely you acted the day that Hilda returned from the forest, wearing all those queer decorations, and escorted by all those other apes?" Hungerford asked him quizzically. Rimpano shifted in his chair and puffed his cigarette like a bulging volcano.

"Me most all forget what you'm say ...," the negro muttered.

“You needn’t pretend to be innocent,” Hungerford told his servant, “for you know what those apes meant. You even expected it, or you wouldn’t have said what you did when Hilda reappeared that day. Now you may as well tell me at once what it is, and save a long powwow, for I mean to find out,” he finished decisively.

Rimpano shrugged his shoulders. “You’m no be

147

pleased if me tell you. You think me lie. But if you’m want to know—Hilda go back to her home in woods, get all her people—even big ugly ape with long white beard, who am her king, and bring ’em here.”

“But what for?” Hungerford protested.

“You’m just wait—me tell you all,” the servant replied. “You’m no know ape customs, like me do. You’m know white folk customs, and me no know. Them all not same. Ape folks have own ways, them own laws. Them have nice weddin’ habit; when one nice lady ape, like Hilda, get ready to marry man ape, if she’m be grand princess, she’m make heap, fine, big wreath of flowers and bring to big king. This her way askin’ if him willing to make big weddin’ ceremony for her and her people.

“Hilda, she make big wreath, bring it to you’m, and you’s throw over her shoulders saying ‘yes, me make big ceremony and marry you to ape man.’ Hilda she much happy. Run tell her folk all you will do for her. Right back to forest she go to tell all apes that grand white preacher man going to be friend to all her people and make ceremony. Her folks all have big dinner to celebrate. Then she’m come with all her people and with her ape man to have big weddin’. This mean all apes be very happy, for ape folks and white folks all be good friends, white folks never kill no more apes.

148

“Oh-hoh, poor Hilda find grand white ladies already come and take her place, pour tea, help white man. She’s say ‘no care, all hell to go!’ and break all dishes and act ugly, when white preacher no ask her people into grand house and have big ape weddin’. All the ape folks say, ‘Hilda has no friend with white folk, she’m lie to us. Them no like her people, them no make grand weddin’ ceremony for her and her ape man.’ Then she’m go back to the woods—all disgraced and shamed, no married; her man he run clear on off leavin’ her like old maid—no lover, no nothin’. She’m never, never come back.”

Hungerford was amazed, dumbfounded! His brain almost ceased to reason. But he knew that Rimpano was possibly telling the truth. The African knew too much about the apes to be mistaken. Dr. Garner had declared that Rimpano was the best informed man in Africa on the habits and customs of the simian tribes.... This, then, explained all to Hungerford. It brought back with a rush his faith in Hilda's humanness. If the apes in their ways, to say nothing of Hilda's reasoning powers, were so closely allied to the ways of civilized beings, it certainly gave Hungerford something to go on with in his scientific researches.

All of his former interests were revived. But he remembered that Rimpano had told him that Hilda

149

would in all probability never return. She and her tribe had been insulted, and her pride was in arms.

As the whole thing began to dawn upon Hungerford, he felt an inward sense of humiliation, and he could not resist a half-suppressed roar of laughter; and then another thought came to him, and he said to Rimpano: "There is one thing I want you to remember, Rimpano, and that is, you must tell no one what you have told me about Hilda and why she acted as she did at the tea party. Do you understand?"

"Me no tell." The African looked puzzled. But Hungerford was determined that he should not be made a laughing-stock at the Post by those who neither understood nor sympathized with Hilda; and so far as his scientific interest was concerned, his friends had not even as much interest as the natives. If only he dared tell them half he now knew of the apes!

Part II

Hilda was alone in the great forest. Back at the same old home where she was born. But her devotion to her master and to his civilized ways of living had grown until life there meant misery to her.

She too was thinking, thinking of the time when she and her brothers had gone to watch from the shelter of the plantains near the Mission shed. It had

150

been the music and the strange ceremony which was held there—unlike any she had ever seen among her own people. How kind had the white master been to her! He had seemed to respect all their lives just as did the black men, and she had learned to love to serve him and his way of living. There she was free from all danger, such as her people knew in the great forest. He gave her protection, and she was fond of serving him in return.

When his attitude had seemed to indicate a return of her loyalty and regard, how could she know the subtleties and varieties of man's emotions? That love for a cherished pet, for a child-like companion, or for a little ward, differed from the love of a male for his mate she vaguely realized in her animal mind. She was strangely happy in feeling that this white man was a friend to her people. He would help save them from persecution.

She had at last been encouraged to make the betrothal wreath, and when he had carried out his part of that ceremony indicating that he would act as the minister and perform the ceremony for her, she had never dreamed that he had done so by pure chance. It did not occur to her that he who knew so much, did not know the customs of her people. All her people had celebrated the announcement of her engagement to one of her ape tribe. She had brought back

151

her *fiancé*, with all the great ones of her tribe, even her grandfather, the aged king himself, to witness her triumph and attend the wedding at the white man's house. And to think he insulted her!

When the white king was faithless enough to forget his promise, was it not the recognized right of the female ape to set upon the white princess and drive her from the field? Had she not once seen a displaced ape bride rend a rival limb from limb, and the tribe applaud her just vengeance? And yet Hilda's master had behaved as if she herself had been at fault, though she had not done so much as her rights had warranted. She had even prevented her furiously indignant people from returning to the house and punishing her Lord. It had been with considerable difficulty that she had restrained them. Had she not been the white princess, the granddaughter of their king, they would never have listened to her command, in which her humiliated grandfather had unwillingly supported her.

Hilda tried to reason the matter out. There were so many things which puzzled her. There had been two human princesses, whom she had never before seen. Whence had they come in her absence, had been a problem

which she could not solve, to begin with. Had they caused him to forget his promise? But she had not objected to one of the princesses, who had

152

mind her own business. It was the tall, insolent one, with hair like a lion's mane, who had usurped Hilda's place, she who had poured the tea and had taken such a proprietary attitude.

She had stood her ground. Hilda had to admire her for that, grudgingly. And a human princess might have been expected to love him. That was all right. He was really the one to blame. Nevertheless, toward him Hilda could feel no ire. All her resentment was for the woman who insulted her. In this respect on a low scale, she was quite humanly feminine.

As Hilda saw it, she had been wrongly treated, and had returned to the forest disgraced, the butt of the ape world. Her position was analogous to that of some royal human princess who had been made a joke by the ruler with whom her ministers had proposed to have perform the wedding ceremony. For Hilda there were no headlines in the papers, but there were sneers and gossip on every hand from her grandfather's subjects.

"So the great human king did not want you to be married at his fine house!" they howled in their apish jabber, "and you have come back to ours. Even your husband will not forgive you. We were not good enough for you when you thought you could do better. But now that you have learned that you can't, you have returned to us." They would have gone further,

153

and cast her out of their tribe altogether, had they dared; but her exalted connection forbade that.

Even had they received her kindly, and tried to console her, it would have been very hard for Hilda to return to their ways of living. She had been gone from them so long that even their language now sounded to her like the queer jargon that it was. She found herself mentally groping in her master's language, which had so many, many more words to express her thoughts.

Having become accustomed to his ways, and to comforts and protection from enemies that she did not have among her own people, she had outgrown the latter, and felt herself a stranger amongst them, so far as her interests were concerned. She had hoped to take her *fiancé* to the white

king's home that he too might help her serve the white king. Yet she could never go back to the home of her adoption. Never would she hear him play the pretty music on Sunday, while she sat in the corner. Her place had been lost forever there. Even her ape lover had now left her also.

She spent most of her time high up in the top of a mimosa tree, where none could witness her misery, and there often she sat far into the night as the moon shone brightly through the trees, listening to the

154

myriads of noises in the deep undergrowth far below. She remembered the many happy days she had spent at the little hut, the music at the Mission, and him ... the great white master. Only the huge round jungle moon looked down upon her huddled form.

Sorrow was nothing to the man in the moon for he had seen much of it in all climes and times, sufficiently so to make him grave and sad. And still, philosophically, he smiled steadily on. But his smile was never mocking; it held compassion for the poor humans whose plight he had watched through all the ages. And perhaps with pity now his gentle beams touched a little white ape sitting forlornly in the top of a tall mimosa tree in the heart of an African jungle!

155

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE JUNGLE IS EXPLORED

Part I

“**S**UPPOSE we get up a party and explore the jungle,” proposed Lady Cornelia one afternoon when Hungerford and Telford had dropped in for tea. “I’ve determined to let nothing trouble me here, but to live the easy, care-free life of the native—joining fishing and hunting expeditions when I have the opportunity; at other times enjoying existence in my own way, apart from everybody at the Post, learning what I can of nature so that my time will not be wasted. Why couldn’t we spend a few days or weeks camping?”

“And for what earthly reason?” queried Arthur Norton lazily. “It would be a lot of trouble for nothing.”

“No, it wouldn’t. Chance to get some big game,” put in Telford. “I’d go in a minute, if you’d get up a party, and want me. I think a good hunting trip would put new life into all of us.”

“What about you going, Chester? ... Of course,

156

we couldn’t go without you. The hunting part wouldn’t trouble you, would it? But that wasn’t exactly what I had in mind. I just want to get out and take some pictures—you know I’ve overworked my camera ever since I’ve been here, Mr. Telford—and gain some further impressions of the country.”

“I’ve already too many impressions of the country,” her sister dismally declared. “And as for camping—I had enough when we came up here to do one poor woman for life!”

“Ha-ha!” laughed Lady Cornelia. “You *do* speak discouragingly; but this would be different. We’d take our own tents and everything we need for comfort. The opportunity may never come our way again. We ought to take advantage of it while we’re here. And I suppose I couldn’t go without a chaperon, even though I’m ages older in years and worldly wisdom than you. How ridiculous these customs are! If we can arrange the trip, do say

you'll go, Evelyn, and be a sweet darling! I shall never return to England happy unless I've had that experience."

"Oh, I dare say I'll have no choice in the matter if you make up your mind to it." The importuned Evelyn made herself a picturesque martyr as she sighed her compliance. "After all I've been through already, no doubt a few more days of discomfort wouldn't kill me. If a lion should devour me whole, I'd have my

157

revenge in the knowledge of your terrible remorse for the rest of your days!"

"Surely, Hungerford wouldn't deny us the comforting feeling of a few guns for protection?" Telford protested.

"Certainly we'd take guns along, or I'd not go a step," Evelyn stated. "Even Cornelia wouldn't expect me to go wandering through an African jungle with nothing but Providence to stand between me and a lot of wild beasts."

"You have no faith in Providence, then, Evelyn?" Hungerford smilingly inquired. Though he had not indicated it by his words, he was becoming quite interested in the proposed trip into the jungle; for since their talk in the forest he found himself in a peculiar position with regard to Lady Cornelia. He did not know whether to consider himself conditionally accepted or entirely rejected, whether he was practically an engaged man or a stupid ass. But he made up his mind that before long he would obtain from her a more satisfying answer. The chance might very well come while they were on this jungle trip.

Evelyn made a face at him. "I have in a sense, of course. But in the jungle my faith would be much stronger if I had a good gun in my hands and knew how to use it.... I suppose you'll take along everybody at the Post and the village, Cornelia!"

158

"No, let's see," Lady Cornelia considered. "Why, I don't think we need anyone else at all, Evelyn. It will be lots jollier if we don't have a crowd. And I don't suppose there are many who could go, or would care to, anyway. Of course there'll be a dozen or so natives, whatever number we need."

“You talk as if we had already settled it,” said Captain Norton. “It wants a lot of considering; I’m not sure that Telford and I could get leave, and....”

“Nonsense!” His sister-in-law dismissed his objections with a word.

“Cornelia *has* settled it,” Evelyn informed them, with a gesture of resignation.

Part II

Preparations for the trip were hastily made, and every member of the party felt a certain thrill at the thought of crossing unmapped rivers which wind like long snakes through the trackless forests. To Hungerford it was the realization of a long cherished dream. Perhaps they would find the home of the apes and get some new light on their methods of living.

When the five whites with their small escort of blacks led by Rimpano started from Rambunda, it was in some respects as strange a group as had ever set out on safari. Besides the general outfit, each one

159

seemed to have violated the order to travel lightly by slipping into the luggage some particular treasure without which he or she felt that the expedition could not be accomplished.

Lady Cornelia was taking a large box of bonbons. Wherever she traveled, she averred, whether on the Riviera or in Uganda, she was dependent upon sweets to munch. Her sister had put in a couple of books. Captain Norton had added several bottles of Burgundy, which, he asserted, by way of excuse, was one of the most efficacious of all antidotes for snake bites. Hungerford’s large paper of safety pins—“In case we rip anything, or lose buttons, you know”—caused more mirth than any of the other items; with Rimpano’s aged female dog—“Umtaro;” tail holder—as a good second. Telford carried a harmonica, from which he was wont to torture tunes on uneventful evenings in the barracks. There was so much amusement over their “indispensables” that Rimpano asked Hungerford curiously, “Why everybody laugh so much?”

The trail which they took at first was like a tunnel cut through the solid mass of verdure. Into this primeval forest the sun could not penetrate, except at midday, when thin, lace-like rays pierced the green gloom. Strange climbing plants, varying in size from whipcords to ships’ hawsers hemmed in the trail on

both sides, and overhead the foliage formed a roof which shut out the sky for a mile at a stretch.

Rain water, which had stood for months, formed stagnant pools in hollows made by the feet of elephants. Mud was plentiful, and the porters seemed to be entirely indifferent to it; or rather, they appeared to seek it out wherever there was a choice of two paths, as they found it pleasantly cool and soft to their bare feet. Sometimes the trail followed through mud and shallow water until Lady Evelyn declared in disgust that she should have brought along a pair of rubber boots instead of Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy.

From above, the dew-soaked, dripping shrubbery gave them constant showers until noon, when the heat dried the moisture even where the sun could not reach. Much of the vegetation was covered with thorns and spines. Thorny branches often obstructed the trail at a height which was just right to catch them under the chin or leave a scratch across their faces. Once they had to ford a stream so deep that the men waded to their armpits. The women were carried, but even then they got wet.

Conditions were such as to make everyone miserable. But Lady Cornelia jested about everything, and vowed that she had never had a jollier time in

her life. Even Evelyn bore up bravely, but she by no means shared her sister's enthusiasm for the trip.

"There's no accounting for Cornelia's strange ideas of pleasure," she confided to Telford, while Lady Cornelia energetically forged ahead with Hungerford. "I remember once in Scotland, at a house party, when we were all cursing a week of steady rain, she went with one of the men for a twelve mile tramp over the moors every day, and always came back radiant, with a complexion like a milkmaid's and an appetite that was positively ungodly. She should have been a gypsy."

Hungerford was making the proposed attempt to bring Lady Cornelia to a more committal attitude, but he found his overtures flatly rejected this morning.

"There are too many wonderful things to see here now, Chester, to waste our time in being sentimental," she said carelessly. She evaded him with a strange defensive look in her eyes. She stood immovable as a marble statue,

gazing fixedly before her. Suddenly she raised her hand, and pointed one finger with a flash: "See that mass of pink orchids with a pink butterfly hovering about them! It ought to make a good picture, if the lights are strong enough.... Look out for that briar bush, it nearly got your eye."

162

"I'm not interested in butterflies and orchids," he admitted as he tried to place his arm about her waist.

She drew away from him coldly, and mockingly said: "They are hard to catch!"

Her words meant nothing, but her tone was undeniable. In despair he abandoned the topic until a more favorable occasion.

Farther and farther into the jungle they penetrated. On every hand were bright-feathered birds, and the air rang with the medley of little notes, interspersed with the guttural cries of monkeys. Millions of insects boomed and buzzed around the flowering trees, and dozens of lizards rustled through the undergrowth.

Once they saw a huge python, in search of birds, reach forth its head from the thick foliage above them, stretch its neck, grasp a bough of a neighboring tree, release its coil from the former, and draw its glistening body from tree to tree.

Lively, restless, little long-tailed monkeys were frequently in evidence, and once near a stream they came upon several gazelles, which bounded away at sight of the party. But apart from these, and the birds and reptiles, they saw few of the jungle inhabitants. Lady Cornelia had had the novice's expectation of encountering huge wild animals every mile of the

163

way. She now learned that most of them do their foraging only at night and remain in their lairs during the day.

Toward evening they came to a glade in which stood a single *Brodingnagian baobab*, the elephant of trees, its luxuriant foliage starred with hundreds of white flowers resembling large roses. Here there was enough dry wood on the ground to supply an all night campfire. The tents were pitched, the hammocks swung, mosquito nets hung to cover them, and all was ready for the night.

Before they had finished eating, darkness came; swiftly, as always in the tropics, at one stride—a darkness that seemed palpable as smoke. Outside

the radius of the campfire it completely enshrouded them. It seemed to rise out of the earth, like a mist, ascending to envelop everything, instead of falling, as it appears to do in the temperate zones.

As it had been a strenuous day everyone was too weary to remain awake long. A silence had fallen over the camp, when suddenly Rimpano let out a terrible scream: "Umtaro gone! Me reckon big snake done eat 'um!"

Everyone was roused to see what the trouble was about, when one of the blacks shouted out: "She'm not gone—she'm sleep in box under fine white lady's bed!"

164

Shrieks of laughter went up from the various tents, and to satisfy all Lady Cornelia called out: "You may all go to sleep now, for 'Tail-holder' is sleeping under my bed on my clothes! I guess she's guarding me from danger."

Soon the camp, with the exception of those blacks who were doing sentry duty, was wrapt in slumber.

Part III

The next day Lady Evelyn declared herself so stiff and sore, bruised and weary, that she was obliged to have a day of rest before continuing the march. Her solicitous husband decided that they should remain in camp where they were for another day and night, but Lady Cornelia was reluctant.

"We ought to get on," she said.

"Get on!" moaned her badgered sister. "Haven't we come to the end of the earth already? In Heaven's name, where do you want to *get* to?"

"Your grammar, Evelyn, is questionable," ventured Captain Norton.

"Never mind my grammar; it's a matter of complete indifference to me now," the rebellious lady retorted.

"She could be carried in one of the hammocks," insisted Lady Cornelia.

165

"Nev-er!" the other protested hotly. "Do you call that a rest? As this is supposed to be a pleasure trip," she added bitterly, "I think you might grant me the one pleasure I ask—which is to lie still for twenty-four hours. At the end of that time, I may possibly feel remotely like a human being again."

Her pleading was regarded, and the others prepared to spend the day exploring the territory around the camp.

They were still lingering over their breakfast when they heard a sudden thunderous trumpeting that seemed to shake the ground with its reverberations. They stopped eating and listened. For more than a minute no one moved. It was a sound that no one of the five had ever heard before. Evelyn turned pale, and looked questioningly from one face to another.

Rimpano, who was serving them, forgot his English for the moment, and, round-eyed, whispered: "El Fiuhl!" Hungerford had learned the word, if not the awe-inspiring sound, and knew that it was the bellow of a great bull elephant on the warpath.

As it came again, this time farther off, Telford exclaimed with shining eyes: "Elephants, eh? Gad! I'd like to shoot one!"

Probably Captain Norton mentally echoed his sentiments, but as no one encouraged him, the young

166

Lieutenant finished his after breakfast cigarette in somewhat sulky silence. Lady Cornelia, who had asserted that no civilized person ever smokes before luncheon, ate chocolate and carried on an animated conversation with Rimpano about the possibility of photographing an elephant at close range.

Soon after the meal, Telford stopped by Evelyn's hammock to talk with her a few minutes before setting forth on a little explorative jaunt of his own. She was already happily absorbed in a book, but closed it at his approach, keeping a finger inserted to mark her place, and smiled happily upon him. As he leaned against a tree-trunk in a careless attitude, she noticed the butt of a revolver sticking out of his hip pocket.

"It's just in case I should run up against something that tried to attack me," he explained as he saw her glance. "One doesn't like to go about utterly defenseless in these wilds."

"Of course not," she agreed readily. "It's only sensible of you to carry it."

Part IV

Telford's rather aimless wanderings carried him some distance from the camp. Shortly before noon, when he was thinking of turning back, his

attention was arrested by the sight of a hut-like structure of

167

sticks and grass in the branches of a large tree just ahead of him. It was large enough for a human habitation and roofed over with palmetto leaves. While he stood staring at it wonderingly, from an almost hidden opening among the leaves emerged a young chimpanzee. Swinging itself downward from the limbs, it landed upon the ground a short distance from him. Telford, thinking it intended to attack him, drew his revolver and fired. With an anguished cry the ape fell dead within ten feet of him.

For a moment he was tense with a realization of what he had done; then with Hungerford in mind, he turned with a shrug to retrace his steps to the camp, intending to say nothing about the incident. But to his surprise, he saw Captain Norton and one of the natives coming toward him. The Captain, too, had been reconnoitering in the neighborhood, and their paths had crossed at this fateful moment. However, when Telford had explained the killing according to his view, he was relieved to find Captain Norton agreeing that under the circumstances he had done the natural thing.

168

CHAPTER XIX.

LADY CORNELIA'S EXPERIENCE

Part I

AFTER the midday meal, while Lady Evelyn napped in her hammock, her sister and the three men went together on a search for photographic subjects, leaving Rimpano in charge of the camp. Telford still had his revolver, and they also took along a couple of blacks who carried guns.

Late in the afternoon, all at once, they came upon a small open space. And there, not a hundred feet away, stood an elephant at the edge of the woods beyond, feeding upon the leaves of a plantain. As the wind was not in the right direction, it did not catch their scent, and continued eating.

Great was Lady Cornelia's delight. Here was a rare subject for her camera.

"Sh-s-sh!" she cautioned, signaling them with her right hand to keep silent, and then quickly made three exposures. The huge beast was still placidly chewing the plantain leaves, while they, hardly daring to breathe, stood for a moment, watching it eat.

169

"I'd give a quid to have a pot at it," Telford declared in a whisper.

Hungerford turned to him in some irritation. "Why is it that you always want to kill something?" he asked, allowing his exasperation to find its way into his tone.

Telford eyed him with a touch of insolence. "Why is it that you have an aversion to all sport?" he countered shortly.

They had scarcely raised their voices, but their speech carried to the ears of the elephant, which now turned and saw them. Lifting its trunk in a surprised, inquiring sort of way, it stood listening, with its enormous ears standing out on either side of its head. It seemed undecided whether to retire, advance, or ignore the intrusion altogether and finish its repast.

Probably never before had it seen human beings, or, at any rate, white people.

Perhaps the longing which Telford had felt, ever since the trumpeting of the morning, to try his marksmanship on such big game became irresistible now that it was within reach; perhaps in a sudden funk he thought the elephant was going to charge them, or it might have been something of both which led him suddenly, without a word, to seize from the hands of the gun-bearer who had just come up,

170

the large breech-loading elephant gun the man was carrying, and, before anyone had grasped his intention, to take aim and fire at the wavering elephant.

With a roar, it charged them, its trunk stretched straight out, and its ears spread like sails. Rapidly Telford fired two more shots. The first of these brought it down. There was no need of the last, which went wide of its mark. The elephant's brain had been squarely penetrated, and it crashed down, a motionless, mountainous heap of dingy grey hide. The earth seemed shaken by its fall.

It all happened with breathless speed. After a dazed instant, Hungerford turned upon Telford in anger.

"Why did you do that?" he demanded. "And why was an elephant-gun brought on this trip, anyway? Rimpano had my orders to bring nothing but ordinary rifles."

"The brute was going to charge us when I fired the first shot," Telford retorted hotly. "It's lucky for us that there *was* an elephant-gun along, and that I used it when I did. And I'll thank you to take a different tone with me, Hungerford. I'm not subject to your orders, and don't forget it."

Captain Norton and Lady Cornelia now intervened, and while they were arguing, out of the dark underbrush came a baby elephant not more than

171

three feet high. It had evidently been feeding in the thicket, near its mother, and frightened by the shots, remained in hiding. Then hearing nothing more, it had ventured forth to seek her.

It was already dark, and under the large trees, through the shadows they saw the little creature approach its mother on its wobbly legs and twist its

trunk coaxingly around her neck as if begging her to arise. It did not seem at all to realize that she was dead.

Lady Cornelia was almost overcome at the sight. With a cry of pity, she darted forward impulsively, and before the men could follow, was at the baby's side, patting its head and talking to it as if it had been an orphaned human infant.

It showed no fear of her, and responded with affectionate nuzzlings and caressing motions of its trunk. As the others reached her side, she noticed that the little elephant was becoming more unsteady on its feet, and then perceived, in the uncertain light, that blood was trickling from a wound in its side. Kneeling to examine the spot, she cried in astonishment and distress:

"Why, it's been shot! What on earth could have ... Oh, it must have been your last shot, the one that went astray. Mr. Telford ... How could you!"

172

She was all woman now, pitying the injured, accusing the injurer, inconsistently failing to take into account the fact that it had been a most freakish accident which had carried the third shot home to an unseen victim, as Telford tried to remind her.

The young one had tottered over now and lay helpless upon its side. Lady Cornelia knelt by it, unreasoningly trying to stanch the flow of blood with her inadequate handkerchief. It had been fatally hit, and was already drawing its last breath.

Witnessing its pitiful death throes, Hungerford was as deeply moved as Lady Cornelia. His anger toward Telford increased.

"I seem to have got myself in bad all round today," the Lieutenant muttered with a touch of defiance. "But I did only what I thought was best for our safety. And I certainly had no idea of killing that poor little brute."

"If you hadn't fired that first shot, the mother would have gone off into the woods in another moment," Hungerford returned. "She had no idea of charging when she first saw us. She was simply surprised, and hesitated for a minute."

The other's impatient reply was cut short by Captain Norton. "I think he's right in this instance, Telford. I don't believe she would have attacked us if

173

you had left her alone. I don't mean to impugn your motives, but I do think you're too hasty. Very likely you made an equal mistake this morning in supposing that young chimpanzee meant you any harm, when you shot it." Then he stopped abruptly, realizing that he had inadvertently revealed an occurrence about which he had meant to keep silent. Telford glowered at him resentfully. Both Lady Cornelia and Hungerford caught the remark, and now questioned the two men.

"Well, in view of your prejudices, Hungerford, I had intended to say nothing about the matter," the Captain admitted. "But now I've accidentally let the cat out of the wallet, and it really doesn't amount to much, after all ..." Then he proceeded to give them a brief account of the happening that morning.

Telford maintained a defensive attitude, but it struck him with surprise that Hungerford received the news in a manner that was grave rather than censorious.

"This isn't a question of my prejudices," he said seriously, "but of possible consequence. The apes will be furious when they discover what Telford has done; and it won't be difficult for them to trace the act to our camp. They might even attempt some revenge.... We'd better get back as soon as we can, and put a couple of extra men on watch tonight. Any-

174

way, we can do no good here; and it's nearly dark now."

The two natives had been busy with their knives since the shooting. In addition to removing a shoulder and one or two other parts of the big cow elephant, they had cut out the heart, that being the tenderest of the meat. Lady Cornelia forbade them to touch the calf, although they begged to, protesting that its flesh would be much tenderer than that of the mother. She knew that in giving the order to leave it alone she was for once indulging in sheer sentimentality, but she could not bear the thought of hacking up its poor little body for food.

Telford, though considerably subdued by the disfavor of the others, declared to Captain Norton: "Those tusks are very fine specimens for a female, and I intend to send my man after them tomorrow. Sentiment shouldn't ..." One glance from Lady Cornelia was sufficient to cause him to be quiet.

Part II

The long walk to the camp was a dreadful one for Lady Cornelia. She had taken but a few steps when she became aware that her right boot was very wet; also her thick-knitted stocking, and even the bottom of her short khaki skirt. Investigating, she found that they were saturated with the blood of the baby elephant.

175

In her preoccupation, she had not realized that the blood had been running down from the gaping wound into her boot.

“Squish! Squ-sh! Squ-sh!” With every step she made came the sickening reminder of what she had just experienced. Had she been wounded herself, and her own blood been flowing from her leg, she could have borne it with fortitude. But the horrible squish of blood in her shoe was almost too much.

Finally, when the long, harrowing walk was over, and she had bathed and put on other clothes, Lady Cornelia somewhat recovered her poise. And after the meal she forced herself to join in the conversation of the others and respond to the remarks of her sister, who was in a much more agreeable mood after the day of rest. By bedtime Cornelia had once more become almost her customary cheerful self.

Part III

It was a perfect African night. Nearby clumps of trees and tangles of vines assumed strange fantastic forms. The tall acacias were phantasms, the low-growing amoma and phrynia, whose blossoms and berries were bright when the sun shone, at this late hour in the light of the rising moon, had become vague gray banks concealing secrets of the jungle.

The utter silence of the moment made the place

176

the more impressive. Every sound was stilled, and they could see no life but the intermittent sparks of countless giant fireflies flashing against the dark background of foliage.

Suddenly, as if the signal had been given, the cicadas commenced chirping, like myriads of tinkling silver bells ringing in unison. Night-bugs whirled by with a deep humming that formed a kind of bass accompaniment to the cicadas' music. Frogs with the boom of drums, and

others with flute-like trebles, joined in the orchestra from their hidden pools.

Then from an impenetrable thicket close by came the tortured voice of the wood ibis, its note of bitter lamentation rising to a sudden shriek, then dying away in a faint moaning, “E-ee-e-o-oh! E-ee-o-oh!” The sound brought an eerie shiver to the listeners.

The big beasts, too, were abroad. The distant roar of a lion came to the ears of the campers. “I’m glad that lion is in the distance,” Lady Evelyn remarked palpitatingly. A little later they heard the agonized cry of an antelope seized by some predatory foe. The nature of its captor they could only guess, and this added to the mystery of this awesome place and hour.

CHAPTER XX.

THE APES SEEK REVENGE

LITTLE did Hungerford and his party dream that within two miles of their camp was the home of Hilda's people. Here she still dragged out her empty existence like a dog without a master. The disdain of the tribe added the finishing chapter to her wretchedness.

Today her brooding had been interrupted by the coming of a grief-stricken mother ape to appeal to her grandfather, the king. The mother bore the body of her dead son, which she found lying lifeless on the ground near their home upon her return after a brief absence.

When she had seen the wound which told all too plainly what had caused his death, she set out to hunt for the slayer and did not have to go very far before she discovered a camp of white men. It was very easy to know that one of them had committed the deed. The terrible, inexplicable weapon which had killed her son she had seen used with the same results upon birds and other live things when she had sometimes crept near the settlement, miles away, where a number

178

of these humans lived together. As further proof there had been a couple of weapons leaning against the trunk of a tree near a tent.

Yes, one of the man-devils had done it, but which one she could not tell. However, all of them were her people's enemies, or one of their number would not have used the weapon upon one of hers. She would have invaded the camp at once and have punished the lot of them, but there might be many more than she had seen, and she could not hope to conquer the number alone.

This was the tale she told the king, demanding the help of the tribes. All were with her. Clamorously they supported her; they would raid the camp this very night.

Hilda sat apart listening to them; she was not asked to join in their councils now. She was thinking. Suppose her master should be among these humans!

But that could hardly be, for he had never used the terrible weapon and had always been considerate of her people. And did he not have the power to make all those who were with him do as he bade them? He was a king, too, for had not those black men at the Mission always bowed their heads before him and responded to his bidding, even going upon their knees to him at times when he said strange words?

Still it might be that he had his power only over

179

the black men. She remembered that those of his own color were not so obedient. Perhaps they also were kings, whom he could not control!

Hilda's brain was in a whirl. She decided that she must go to this camp herself to see those who were there. She must satisfy herself that her master, at least, was in no danger. The tribe was still holding fierce consultation, grouped in a circle about the old king, who sat reflecting soberly.

Unnoticed by them, Hilda slipped silently away from the gathering place. As she had noted the direction indicated by the mother in telling the story, a short journey through the tangled vines and trees brought her in sight of the camp. Here, within close view of the camp, Hilda sat high in a baobab tree, in the darkness behind and among clusters of leaves. She hung down sidewise from a branch, holding only by a front and hind leg, so as to plainly see between thick branches. Her limbs were strong—this was nothing; she could hang all night like this with ease. It was through the flickering glow of lights that she sought the movements of human silhouetted figures as she peered searchingly. People were nothing new to her, but what she had just recently heard concerning how a murder was committed here, from this little begrudged group, they were now like black demons seeking the blood of her own people. Hilda shuddered.

180

Was it here, too, that her greatest friend moved about this group of devils? Yes, and she felt faint when she intuitively sensed his being there. Her old love came back, her old hurt—all made her dizzy and faint. She breathed quickly; she shifted her legs for new strength and sought cool, fresh air to fill her weak lungs. There she could see him now. Her sense could pick him out among thousands. She was like a spirit watching over the unguided one.

Time seemed long before all had retired except several of the blacks who were on watch. They were sitting around the fire, and it was easy to avoid them. She must get into the tents, and look into each. If she found the one she was seeking, she would warn him.

Swinging lightly from tree to tree Hilda was soon over the very heads of the drowsy guards. She dropped gently to the ground and swaggered to the first tent, which stood under the shelter of the branches. The flap was open to admit air. Without a sound, and unobserved she made several glances about and slipped inside.

There, lying in a canvas hammock, protected by mosquito curtains, was the human princess, her rival, sleeping peacefully. A bar of silver moonlight shone through the tent opening, illuminating the figure. Thrown carelessly over her lower limbs was a light rug, and her body was sheathed in a white silk pajama

181

coat. Her tawny mane, braided in two thick plaits, fell across her shoulders.

For a long time Hilda looked at her. Then silently she crept out of the tent again. A strange conflict was in her mind.... She, as well as the mother ape, could have revenge now, complete and satisfying. She would not kill her rival; she would merely go back to her own bed, a hole in a hollow tree, filled with leaves and moss instead of white sheets, dainty coverings and silken garments. But when she waked in the morning, she would know that the human princess was destroyed. She would leave her people to pursue their vengeance—and hers.

Hilda moved stealthily out and was already on her way back when another thought arrested her progress; if they killed his princess, would not the master grieve, even as the mother ape grieved for her dead son? If he lost her his heart would ache, as her own did from the loss of her friends and loved ones.

Then the princess must not be destroyed. If he wanted the human princess so much, she should be saved for him, whatever the cost. It was then that the divine spark within Hilda was kindled into flame. Back to the camp she sped. She could hear the muttering of her people in the distance; evidently they

182

were going to waste no further time in parleying, and were already on their way.

Breathless with haste, she reached the baobab once more, and, dropping to the ground, darted into the nearest tent, uttering the shrill “Hie-ee!”—the apes’ warning cry. This tent was in deep shadow. Inside all was darkness so that she could see no one. But as her cry rang out, someone responded instantly, if sleepily, from the cot:

“What! What is it? Is that you, Rimpano?” Hilda recognized the tones—it was the voice of the one she had come to seek.

Then he was, after all, one of the band of these killers of apes! She could not understand it.... Another pang of dismay and disillusionment smote her. But there was no time to stop now, no time to think. Whatever he was, she loved him as her master and must save him and his princess.

She had found his side in an instant as he reached for the flash light under his pillow. Clutching his big hand with her little pink fingers, she grunted: “Uh! Uh!—A—Ae!!” And with her gestures, she pointed towards Lady Cornelia’s tent, and made him understand that the apes were approaching, thus warning him of the dangers to Lady Cornelia.

Hungerford grasped the situation at once. The

183

revenge of the apes, which he had feared, was impending. The only thing which he could not fathom was Hilda’s connection with it, and how she had found him; she must be a member of their tribe. At any rate, her anxiety to save him, and especially Lady Cornelia, showed that she was still loyal to him and those for whom he cared, even against her own people. His old confidence in her was completely restored.

Quickly he bounded from his hammock and slipped on his boots. There was not a moment to lose. He could hear the angry voices of the apes, swelling in volume as they drew nearer. Hungerford was startled by the long, piercing cry of one of the approaching apes which sounded strangely loud in the still night. The inharmonious, raucous shrills had at last aroused the sleepy sentinels, who were hastening to the tent doors to call the men.

Hungerford’s first thought was for Lady Cornelia. He had not heeded Hilda’s reminder. As he dashed from his tent across the open space to hers, he saw Lady Cornelia standing at its entrance, a bathrobe hurriedly thrown around her.

“Oh! What is it, Chester? I heard noises—and ...”

“Quick!” he cried. “Take this gun!” thrusting a revolver into her hand. In his fear for her his scruples

184

vanished. For a second she stood still, at a loss what to do, then with a cautious glance about, scarcely breathing, she waited for a decisive move.

Captain Norton was already at the door of his tent, the blanched face of Lady Evelyn being visible over his shoulder. Telford’s tousled head protruded from the opening of the adjoining tent. The blacks were babbling and gesticulating, and the snarl of the apes’ voices was like a growing roar of an oncoming storm.

Hungerford saw the anthropoids were upon them. The beasts sprang like black demons out of the trees into the open space around the campfire, a dozen huge monsters, larger than the men. The aged king lingered discreetly in the background.

“Keep to your tents!” Hungerford shouted to the two women, an injunction which the quaking Evelyn readily obeyed, but which Lady Cornelia ignored.

“I’ll fight to the end ... !” she called back at him, and remained on guard before the entrance to her tent, gripping the revolver in a steady hand.

The white men, hastily armed, fired as fast as their repeaters would allow: “Bang! bang! bang!” they echoed; while the spears and arrows of the natives whizzed and whistled about, like skyrocket at a Fourth of July celebration, felling the apes with

185

unerring aim. Rimpano was the only one of the natives who had a gun; but the others had done well with their arms. The apes were checked for the moment by the gunfire, which brought down five of their number in almost as many seconds; but they hurled stones and clubs, one of which hit Telford upon the temple and stunned him. He fell like a log. Another missile struck Rimpano’s leg, but, though crippled, he stuck sturdily to the fight.

Then the apes made a dash. Captain Norton, before he could take action of any kind, found himself in the grip of one of them; though he struggled desperately, his efforts were as futile as those of an infant in the grasp of a grown man. Feeling himself going down under the resistless pressure of those iron-muscle arms, he called chokingly to Hungerford:

“For God’s sake don’t let them get Evelyn!”

Hungerford saw that Lady Cornelia still stood her ground, clutching the revolver tightly. But the power to use it seemed to have deserted her. She was so dazed by the suddenness of it all, that shock, rather than fright, had temporarily paralyzed her.

It was only when she saw her brother-in-law's terrible encounter with the ape that she seemed all at once to be reanimated, and though hardly knowing what she did, she raised the pistol and fired directly

186

at the brute. With a howl it loosened its hold, and fell writhing beside the unconscious body of Captain Norton. Staring for a moment upon the two prostrate bodies and the flowing blood, she relaxed, letting her arms with the gun drop limply to her sides.

But Lady Cornelia did not even witness her victory. She had been unaware of a noise behind her until the instant after the shot was fired when she heard a tearing sound within the tent. Turning sharply and looking inside, she perceived to her horror that one of the apes had torn a long slit in the canvas roof with its powerful claws and was peering through at her. The moonlight showed her plainly its hideous face, with red-rimmed, leering eyes, the awful lips drawn back in a vicious grin which revealed its sharp, yellowed tusks.

It paused but an instant. Springing through the opening it was beside her. She tried to raise her arm to fire, but there was no time. The immense hairy arms of the monster closed around her; she could feel its foul breath upon her face. Such feeble resistance as she was able to make seemed only to infuriate it.

Fiercely it clutched her in a closer embrace. The bathrobe had fallen from her shoulders, and the white surrah of her pajama coat was rent from her body by the animal's violence. She tried to scream, but no sound would issue from her mouth. Dully she noticed

187

that its claws had ripped her arm from shoulder to elbow, leaving a deep gash from which a bright stream of red was flowing. But she did not feel the pain of the wound.

As one of the ape's black leathery hands gripped her throat she closed her eyes. A little prayer passed through her mind. She was conscious of the

thought: “O, Lord, let death come quickly!” And then she quieted, swayed, tottered and fell prostrate.

CHAPTER XXI.

HILDA WINS FAVOR

Part I

IT WAS Hilda who saved Lady Cornelia. Hiding in Hungerford's tent, horrified by the terrific battle, Hilda was well aware that if her people knew of her presence there and her efforts to thwart them, they would show her no more mercy than they did the humans. Her grandfather could not save her.

Cautiously watching through the tent-opening, she had again screamed her cry of warning when she had seen the big ape invade Lady Cornelia's tent. But in the thick of the fight no one had heard her. She had faced a second of indecision. Then, ignoring the risk to herself, she had slipped out of Hungerford's tent behind the others and, unseen, entered that of Lady Cornelia through the hole in the roof.

Reaching the spot just as the vise-like hand of the ape was tightening upon her rival's throat, Hilda, without stopping to think, sprang upon its back before it had even seen her, and clawing its shoulders with all her might, bit the head and ears of the beast.

It could not see what spiteful creature was suddenly

189

attacking it from the rear, but snarling it let go of its victim, and by turning and twisting, tried to get at the figure clinging doggedly at its back. Hilda stuck like a leech, knowing that if it once got a hold upon her it would tear her small body to pieces.

Outside she could see Hungerford and the blacks, still engaged in deadly combat with the surviving apes, and Rimpano leaning for a moment against the tree, exhausted after just having felled a huge antagonist. "Ep! Ep! Ep!" she cried to Hungerford.

He was momentarily free, and dashed for the tent. Great was his amazement to find Hilda there. At sight of Lady Cornelia's bruised and bleeding form lying unconscious and Hilda's heroic efforts to save her from

the malignant animal, which still labored unsuccessfully to free itself, new strength came to Hungerford; with the fiendish fury of an ape himself he snatched a hunting knife from the girdle of Rimpano, who had just run into the tent, and plunged it into the grisly body of the beast. With one mighty twist of the knife he literally ripped the entrails out of the ape.

A low sound behind him made him whirl to see another ape in the doorway. Seeming, however, to ignore Lady Cornelia, Hungerford and Rimpano, and growling some demand in the ape language to which

190

Hilda voiced a frantic refusal, it advanced toward her. She backed into a corner of the tent and cowered there piteously.

The alert African had by this time snatched up Lady Cornelia's revolver and was about to fire when the ape came so close to Lady Cornelia that he feared that he might strike her. But he saw that the ape was addressing itself to Hilda as it advanced toward her. She huddled helplessly to Rimpano and cried for him to save her. Rimpano had backed into Hilda's corner, his body screening her, and now he mechanically pulled the trigger. The report sent the beast sprawling upon the ground, trumpeting in rage with exulting roars, so that the ears were stunned from the fierce vibrations, but another shot silenced it forever.

Hilda was still quivering with fright and muttering weakly words which strangely sounded like: "Kill me! Don't let!"

With real affection the native stretched forth a hand and patted her reassuringly. "No be 'fraid, Hilda," he comforted her. "You'm stay by mission house—all time. You'm be good girl now. No more bite Rimpano; no more break dishes and hit lady with best teapot."

As soon as Hungerford had a free instant in which to think at all, he thought of Lady Cornelia. With a

191

fast beating heart he snatched a towel from the end of her cot, plunged it into a bowl of water, and began wiping her face.

His heart almost stopped beating as he saw how silent and motionless she lay. In that profound silence of her form, the mysterious loneliness of her still face, Hungerford stupidly gazed for a moment on her unconscious life, which created in him a strange feeling—inexplicable. Her eyes were closed and the bloody print of the ape's hand upon her white throat

appalled him. He gave a cry that seemed wrung from the depths of his soul. Hilda knew what that cry meant. But even in that moment of jealous despair for her she was glad that it was not as he thought, and that she had helped to save his princess.

He called some of the men, and soon they had Lady Cornelia's wounds bathed and dressed in a rough fashion. Not until she was again conscious did he think of any of the others.

The attack, though frenzied while it lasted, was soon over. When more than half their number had been slain, the apes suddenly turned and fled. Fear that those unconquerable weapons would annihilate their tribe at last routed them.

It was daybreak when the battle ended. As the first rays of the sun lighted the glade, they fell upon a

192

scene of ghastly confusion. The bloody bodies of the dead apes lay all about the camp. The tents and outfits had suffered much damage, and the men, though none had been killed, were in several cases severely injured. Already exhausted as they were with morbid excitement, they fought until the last minute on sheer nerves.

Hilda, whom Hungerford had forgotten completely, had crept back into his tent and crawled into his hammock. There she lay, a miserable little creature, dumbly wondering why she had begged Rimpano to save her life, now that her master no longer wanted or needed her.

Lady Cornelia was badly hurt, but game with the stoicism of her race. Although too weak from loss of blood to talk much, she tried to make light of her injuries. But her eyes held a haunted look which Hungerford had never seen in them before. It would take her a long time to forget that demoniac face glaring into hers until merciful unconsciousness had obliterated it.

Hungerford was bending over her when she opened her eyes. "Chester, dear Chester! Thank God you are safe!" she murmured. Then she bade him see to the others.

He had sent Rimpano to look after Lady Evelyn,

193

who was found unharmed in her tent, where she had quietly fainted when she had seen her husband attacked. Her swoon had saved her the ordeal of

witnessing the succeeding horrors.

Captain Norton's injuries were comparatively slight; thanks to Lady Cornelia's timely shot. Telford, when he had gained consciousness, found that he had a sore and badly swollen head, the result of the club which had struck him, but he was otherwise unhurt. And Hungerford had come through the fight with nothing more than some inevitable scratches and bruises.

Rimpano's several blows had left him scarcely able to walk, his crippled leg having become so stiff that he could not bend his knee. But he had bravely remained in the fight to the end; and Hungerford knew that his loyal servant, as well as Hilda, had aided in saving Lady Cornelia's life.

Hilda's heroism in helping to save her was admirably described to the party by Rimpano, who belittled his own share in the rescue. As soon as Hungerford had seen that all were safe he went to his tent, where he found Hilda. She clung to him, crying and patting his face lovingly, like a mother to whom has been restored a long lost son.

He took her to the others, and Lady Cornelia

194

agreed that Hilda had made complete amends for her behavior on the day of the tea party, for which she was freely forgiven.

"Yes, she has surely atoned for her treatment of you then," Hungerford remarked. "And she has justified all my belief in her. I can't tell you how glad I am to have her back."

"But you don't mean to say that you're going to keep her again?" Evelyn cried in alarm. "You can't tell *what* she may do! They seem to be such treacherous creatures; she might even help them to make an attack upon you later—let them into your house, or something. After this gruesome experience I couldn't bear the thought of a monkey around."

Hungerford flushed as though a human friend had been insulted in his presence. He was sure that Hilda had understood the slur. Looking down into her little pinched, unhappy face, and putting an arm protectingly around her, he said firmly:

"Hilda goes home with us."

Part II

The men began to strike camp at once, preparatory to starting back to the post. There were grave doubts in Hungerford's mind as to whether Lady Cornelia was able to travel or not. Of course, she

195

would have to be carried in a hammock, but it seemed to him a risk for them to move her at all.

Still, he did not believe that they could remain where they were another night. There was a possibility that, if they did, the apes might return with reinforcements. And there were no necessary comforts here for one in Lady Cornelia's condition. She required the attention of a physician, and the few medicines and dressings in their first aid kit were quite inadequate to meet the needs of even the less seriously injured members of the party.

Lady Cornelia bravely insisted that she could easily stand the trip. But Hungerford was very anxious. He was thankful that they had gone no farther on their way than one day's march from the Post.

Before nightfall they were again back in Rambunda, where their unexpected arrival, particularly when their story was told, caused consternation. Major Hoskins' report of Lady Cornelia's condition was not reassuring. It was even more serious than they had feared, and the trying homeward journey had racked her with pain and raised her temperature alarmingly. There was also an internal injury and the Major admitted that her life might be in danger. He would be better able in the morning to estimate her chances of recovery, after seeing to what extent she rallied from the night's rest.

196

He prepared to spend the night in the Norton home, where he could keep close watch on the Captain and Telford, who had been put up in the house. It had all at once become a small hospital.

Then he sent for Mrs. Hoskins to attend Lady Cornelia through the night. He would not trust her in such a crisis to the care of one of the ignorant black women, and her sister was in no condition to be of help. After a fit of weeping upon hearing his pronouncement, Lady Evelyn had gone to bed in a state of collapse. With some professional contempt for her weakness, the Major had given her a sedative and been thankful to have her out of the way.

Hungerford, too, decided to remain with them until the next morning. Rimpano was quartered with the servants, and Hilda, who had kept close to the missionary's side on all of the long day's march, slept upon a couch in his room.

During the night Lady Cornelia emerged from the stupor in which she had lain since being put to bed. But her fever increased and she grew delirious. Major Hoskins' expression showed his anxiety when he made his next report to Hungerford, who spent most of the night hanging about the living room, too perturbed to lie down. They decided to tell Captain Norton, and Hungerford grew white when the Major asked the younger officer abruptly:

197

"If she gets any worse, whom do you think we should notify in England?"

"Is it—you think it is so serious as that?" The Captain choked as he put the question.

"I don't want to alarm you, but frankly, I fear much that it may be necessary," was the answer. "Of course, we'll hope for the best, and she shall have as good care as she can get in this place. If I can save her, I'll do it. But ..." His unfinished sentence was more ominous than any words he could have spoken.

Captain Norton, whose own head was throbbing with pain, tried to collect himself. "Well, if that is the case, we ought to try to get word to her uncle, Bishop Braithwaite. He was also her guardian, and has stood in the position of father to both of the girls ever since their own father died when they were quite small. But I don't see how we—that is, if she's in such danger, we could never send a message from here before she ..." He could not finish.

"We can only do our best," the Major replied. "What you say is quite true, but we can send a message to Entebbe, and from there word can be telegraphed to Mombasa to be cabled home. And of course, as I said, we aren't giving up hope. She stands a chance, and even if we can't pull her through she may linger for several weeks, though if her fever goes much higher ... I shouldn't be so

198

frank with you, but I know you'd both rather have me tell you the truth. And I'm going to send for another doctor and a nurse to come up from Entebbe."

Part III

Lady Cornelia was no better when morning came. Her delirium continued, in which she talked ramblingly of all sorts of things. She made no direct reference to the apes' attack, but referred repeatedly to the death of the baby elephant, declaring with shudders that her boot was filled with blood, and entreating them to remove it.

"It squashes every time I take a step ... ugh! Please take it off. Please ..." she would beg again and again.

Then her delirious thoughts would drift in another direction, and she would be in a merry mood, which hurt Hungerford even more. He was watching by her bedside that morning while Mrs. Hoskins got some sleep. Laughing vacantly, she exclaimed with light-headed amusement: "Monkey servants! How quaint! ... I wrote you about that didn't I, Uncle Gregory? Poor Chester has gone quite mad—he has a chimpanzee housemaid! Ha! Ha! he- a- a- a-! He's quite, quite mad! ..."

Hungerford covered his eyes with his hands and

199

turned away, sick at heart. Had he learned at last what it meant really to love her only to lose her in the hour of realization?

The knowledge of how much he cared had swept over him in the moment when he had entered her tent after that fearful encounter and seen her lying there—dead, he had thought for one awful, paralyzing instant. The fear that he had lost her had awakened him, and he knew that he loved her with all his heart and soul and body. And now he might never again have the chance to tell her so.

He looked at her again, lying there with flushed face, her eyes glistening with fever, her dry lips murmuring meaningless words, and the ache in his heart overpowered him. With passionate longing he repeated her name over and over. He wanted to take her in his arms and crush her to his breast, by the very strength of his love to force her back to rational speech and recognition of him. But he knew he must not touch her.

They were alone in the room, and she was far away with her wandering fancies. Dropping to his knees, he bowed his head upon the bed and prayed brokenly:

“Be merciful, God! Spare her to me, and I’ll try to be worthy. I couldn’t bear to lose her now. She must live, dear God. She must.... She must!”

CHAPTER XXII.

BISHOP BRAITHWAITE RECEIVES A CABLEGRAM

IF YE continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven ...”

Bishop Braithwaite sat before a writing table in his luxurious Winfield study, considering the text for his sermon. Leaning back in the fat leather arm chair, he re-read the passage with pursed lips and a thoughtful frown.

At this moment the butler entered noiselessly with his salver and spoke automatically, “Beg pardon, your Lordship.” The Bishop was almost startled by the voice at his elbow: he had not heard the butler’s entrance, and exclaimed in irritation:

“I wish you wouldn’t come in that way without knocking, Williams. And you know my orders, that I’m never to be disturbed at this hour of the morning for any reason whatever. This is my time to write; I cannot be disturbed.”

The butler remained quite unmoved. Having been

201

in the household for twenty-five years, he was accustomed to the Bishop.

“Beg pardon, your Lordship,” he replied, “but a cablegram has just come, and as I thought it might be very important I ventured to bring it in. I am very sorry to have disturbed your Lordship.” Williams was not really the least sorry to have disturbed his Lordship, nor sorry not to have done so. He had no interest in the matter. It was merely his duty on all occasions to say and do automatically the proper thing.

The Bishop took the cablegram, and with the ivory paper cutter upon his desk slit the envelope methodically. The Bishop was a methodical man. He was vaguely resentful that a cablegram should have come at this hour, just as he had, after a good breakfast, placed his mind upon higher things. In his most British of establishments everything was so perfectly regulated that unforeseen cablegrams arriving at odd hours seemed a sort of impertinence.

Ordinarily nothing went even slightly awry. Every member of the household knew his or her duties to the minutest detail. Seldom did the Bishop even have to press a button and summon a servant. At the appointed hours they performed almost every service for him, save the reading of his Bible and the saying of his prayers. These duties also were accomplished automatically.

202

The Bishop read the telegram. His expression changed. Its contents sent his carefully ordered world reeling.

“Cornelia seriously injured from attack by apes—may prove fatal—Post physician advises you come on next boat.”

It was signed by Arthur Norton.

Bishop Braithwaite’s sensations, when he had read this message, passed through three successive stages; first he was dazed; then emotional; then angry. The last sensation was the legitimate outgrowth of the second with a man of the Bishop’s temperament. He was devoted to his nieces, particularly to Cornelia, so far as he was capable of being devoted to anyone but himself, and in this instance devotion took the form of anger because Providence had permitted a disaster to befall one who was cherished by the Lord Bishop of Winfield. Of course, he did not put it to himself in this way at all. The Bishop was never analytical, even in his sermons, and least of all with regard to himself.

Then, too, his anger was partly, though unconsciously, due to the fact that this misfortune had upset his scheme of things. His wrath extended to Hungerford in its next step. “Injured from attack by apes,” the cablegram said; of course some of Hungerford’s pet monkeys had done this.

203

With violent resentment against the Missionary, he recalled again the letter which had arrived from Lady Cornelia a week before. He knew then how absurd Hungerford was acting about the monkeys—he intended reprimanding him by mail for such foolishness, but before he had done it the cablegram came indicating the result of Hungerford’s folly.

He drew the letter from the drawer of the writing table, where he had placed it with others that were to be answered. Reading it over now, he positively snorted at phrases which Lady Cornelia had characteristically treated with flippancy.

“I wonder if I am not becoming dangerously interested in Chester ... He is handsomer than ever, and as a Missionary is doing good work here; although I must say he seems more interested at times in the monkeys than in the poor heathen! In fact, he has frankly admitted to us that he considers them much more intelligent than many of the blacks.

“Just imagine, Uncle, he had a little white ape, which he called Hilda, for a sort of housemaid! I tell him he is quite mad. But I must admit that she was a wonder; and I sometimes believe that she is more capable of receiving an education than nine-tenths of the natives here. She did not appear to fancy *me* in the least—perhaps my incessant

204

cigarette smoking annoyed her even as it has you at times!! ... What would you do, my dear austere Uncle-Bishop, if you were invited to tea and had it served by a monkey maid with garlands of flowers and gray moss around her?

“Well, that is just what happened to us the first time we called on Chester. At least, I was pouring tea, when she came in with several of her relatives and reminded me—not too gently—that was *her* task. And when we had some slight altercation over the matter, she threw the teapot at me and left the place, just like any British housemaid, without giving notice! Chester hopes she will come back, but I can’t say that I’m regretting her absence at all.

“Chester thinks that I am prejudiced and don’t really know the possibilities of some of these higher apes yet. He says he wants me to ‘meet’ some of them and have an opportunity to study them. It should be illuminating! I shan’t be surprised to have a chimpanzee lady of the upper classes call upon us any day, presenting her card of tanwood bark.

“... Well, I jest, but it is actually all very fascinating. I have never been anywhere in the world where I’ve had a better time; nor have I been where I learned more ... What a number

205

of things we have to learn over again when we get out away from so-called civilization! It has been a real school to me every day since I came here, and I love it. But poor Evelyn doesn’t share my enthusiasm. She begs Art daily to try to get transferred. I don’t see how he can for a year at least ...”

With a final snort, his Lordship roughly folded the letter and thrust it back into its envelope. Monkey servants, indeed! And see what they had done! Chester was crazy! To what lengths would this mania of his carry him?

It was a pity that he was sent to Africa. Yet he had seemed impossible in England. He was apparently impossible anywhere. To think that the son of Roger Hungerford, his oldest friend—and a true British gentleman, if ever there had been one—should have turned out such a queer lot! And Cornelia intimating that she was inclined to consider him as a suitor!

“Nev-er with *my* consent!” vowed the Bishop aloud, bringing his fist down upon the writing table.

Then he was reminded once more of the immense gravity of the message. Cornelia dying—perhaps already ... Incredible! His strong, healthy, happy niece; so self-reliant, so wilful and unconventional,

206

but withal so lovable! The fact was, he had always loved her more than Evelyn because she had a will of her own. Like most headstrong people, he had respected her and felt the great affection for her because he could not dominate her, although he did not admit this to himself.

He would never be able to forgive himself if he did not try to get to her now. He might be too late, but he must obey the summons and make the attempt. The extent of the journey stunned him! He hardly ever went anywhere but to London for a portion of the season, to Scotland for the shooting, to Cowes for the August regatta, to the Riviera or some Italian resort for a few weeks in the spring. These things he had done in the same way at the same time for so many years that they caused him no more effort or confusion in his systematic existence than his afternoon motor ride.

But he must go to Africa—and at once. There was no time to be lost. He must find out when there would be a boat sailing ... there would be untold things to attend to. With some relief he thought of his chaplain. He would know what to do!

He rang for the butler's return. When the man came, he told him:

“Williams, send for Mr. Hilliard at once, and tell

207

Dutton that I'm going to Africa, and he must pack my bag immediately. Oh, you'd better send him to me first. I think that is all ...” His Lordship's

mind was in a maze. Never in all his placid years had he been confronted with such an undertaking. “No—, wait a moment, Williams. There was something else I wanted to speak to you about before the cablegram came.” He placed his hand to his forehead in a moment’s thought ... “Oh, yes! tell the cook that the kidneys were very tough this morning. And she’s to see that it doesn’t happen again!”

CHAPTER XXIII.

ONE QUESTION IS ANSWERED

THESE were anxious days and long, weary nights for all at the Post. Lady Cornelia's recovery was the one dominating thought. Hungerford had practically taken up his abode there, and could not put his mind upon his work.

At last the tide began to turn. After hanging for days between life and death, Lady Cornelia began slowly, but surely, to get better. By the time the doctor and the nurse arrived from Entebbe Major Hoskins had pronounced her out of danger if no unexpected development should cause a relapse. However, the nurse was to be retained until the patient should be entirely convalescent, for her recovery now would depend upon good nursing more than anything else. The doctor was to return to Entebbe shortly. Hungerford had not seen Lady Cornelia since that morning in her room when the weight of his dread and anguish had borne him down and almost crushed him. In the long days and nights of delirium which had followed, Major Hoskins had forbidden both him and Captain Norton to enter the sickroom. They now

209

had trained help, and the anxious men were only in the way.

It was a glad day for Hungerford when finally he was allowed to see her again. She was sitting up, on a chaisé longue by the window, when he was admitted to her room. How pale and thin she seemed to him—almost transparent—so unlike the old Cornelia! Even her glorious tawny hair seemed subdued beneath the lacy boudoir cap. She was a veritable ghost of her former self, but when she bravely smiled at him he saw her eyes alight with the invincible spirit of the woman he had always known.

"I feel perfectly stupid to have had all of you making such a fuss over me, Chester," she told him, as she drew him down to a seat in the big chair by her side. "It seems so absurd for such a great healthy woman as I to go all to smash of a sudden. It's the first time in my life that I've been knocked out."

He could not answer her for a minute as he thought of how nearly she had been “knocked out” altogether. A film of moisture, which he impatiently strove to blink away, had overspread his eyes. She saw it and did not try to ignore it as some women would have done. Gently she asked:

“Would you have been sorry as all that if I had gone, Chester?”

“Sorry!” he cried thickly. “God knows I think it

210

would have killed me, Cornelia. I never knew until that day when I almost lost you how much you meant to me.”

“We never know we have a heart ’til it begins to break,” she quoted softly. “Now, I’m growing maudlin. You see how ill I must have been to get like this!”

He caught both her hands in his, almost roughly in his vehemence. “It’s true; my heart was breaking, and that’s how I became conscious of it. I thought I loved you the day I asked you to marry me, but since then I’ve known that was only play beside what I felt afterwards.”

“Then you are sure now, Chester, that you have found ... what you were looking for?” She put the question quietly, but there was something in her eyes that said how much the answer meant to her.

“Even a thousand times surer than I am of Eternity. I—I can’t tell you in words, Cornelia. There wasn’t a day—an hour—while you were lying here on the brink of death that I wouldn’t have given my life to have saved yours. You have been my only thought, my only dream.... My *life*. I have no life without you!”

“Chester! ... That is the way I wanted you to tell me! I cared for you—so much; but I couldn’t take you without being sure that your love equaled mine. That day when you asked me before, I felt that you

211

were just experimenting. And it hurt both my pride and my love. But now I believe you.”

He had her in his arms before she had finished. The filmy frailness of her boudoir garments were ignored in the fervor of his embrace.

“You believe me now,” he repeated. “You know the strength of my love for you?”

“Yes, Chester, I know,” she answered. “Your love was strong enough to hold me even when I was half across the Dark River. I think I felt it pulling

me back to you through all those dreadful days.”

She was still resting in his arms when the nurse entered a half-hour later. They were talking in low tones, foolishly planning an impossible, celestial future, and did not see her enter or hear her rubber-heeled approach. They were wandering in the Elysian Fields.

The nurse stopped, startled. “Oh! I beg your pardon, I’m sure; but that is strictly against orders, Dr. Hungerford. Lady Cornelia is still very weak and must not be—er—handled, or undergo any—er—excitement,” she stammered, at a loss for proper words in such an unprecedented situation.

“I’m glad that it’s against the orders, Miss Knowles,” Hungerford laughed, too happy to be embarrassed. “Please enforce that order to see that no one else violates it!”

212

Lady Cornelia drew herself out of his embrace and arranged her cap with more composure than the nurse felt was merited under the circumstances. But her face was rosy as she said:

“Congratulate us, Miss Knowles. Dr. Hungerford and I are going to be married.”

“Well, that’s very nice, I’m sure,” Miss Knowles replied with what seemed to them both an impossible lack of enthusiasm. “But it’s time for your dressings now, and then you must be put to bed. Dr. Hungerford will excuse us, I’m sure.”

Thus were they driven from the Temple of Eros by the inexorable mandate of Esculapius.

Lady Evelyn congratulated them prettily when she heard the news. Her husband was equally hearty in his good wishes. But the next morning, when Hungerford called at an early hour in the hope of seeing his fiancée, Evelyn told him that the impassive Miss Knowles was giving her her bath, and then added:

“Come into the dining room with me, won’t you, Chester? I haven’t finished my breakfast, and I want to talk to you.”

As he followed her he remarked lightly: “From your solemn tone I’d think I was in for a scolding if you hadn’t already said you were glad to welcome me as a brother-in-law.”

213

"It is about that," she confessed. "You know I'm fond of you, Chester, and I'm awfully pleased over it. But I'm wondering ... that is ... Uncle Gregory ..."

"Will *not* be pleased," he finished for her. "I think I know already what you want to say. But after all, what difference should it make to *him*?"

"Perhaps it wouldn't make much difference if he weren't coming here," she replied thoughtfully. "We had a second cable from him this morning, from Suez; so before very much longer he'll be here."

"Well, of course, I knew he was coming. And when he arrives I hope he'll be as glad to see me as I'll be to see him." He strove to put an agreeable face upon the matter. "We aren't enemies, you know, Evelyn."

"Yes, I understand that, but we've got to face the facts, Chester. You know that Uncle Gregory never has—quite—approved of you, in several ways ... I deplore saying it, but you must have realized that when he arranged to have you sent here; it was because he was dissatisfied with your methods at St. Giles. And if I may be horribly frank, you were not reflecting any credit upon his distinguished sponsorship there.... Not that I agree with him in everything, by any means," she appended hastily. "But that's that. If you hadn't been friends, he would not have handled the situation as considerately as he did."

214

You know, Uncle can be very hard and unrelenting when he's displeased; and I know he was thoroughly indignant about those sermons of yours. He called them 'atheistic'; Cornelia and I heard him. Of course, we know he is very narrow about some things. Still ..."

"Still, you don't entirely disagree with him in regard to me, eh, Evelyn? Well, I cheerfully admit that I was practically 'kicked out' of St. Giles. But at any rate, when I left there that was the end of your distinguished uncle's authority over me. Please remember that."

"But he could prejudice the Bishop of Uganda against you, if he didn't approve of what you're doing here. And I'm almost certain he'll raise objections to this marriage. He mightn't if you didn't keep doing the sort of things he detests, but you will persist in being so unorthodox, Chester. If only you'd give up all those ideas, especially about the monkeys ..." and added as she saw his lips tighten, "I'm only telling you these things for your own good ..."

“I appreciate your kind intentions, ” he said coldly. “But I suppose Cornelia and I have a right to marry, even if *Uncle* does object. She is certainly of age, and always does as she pleases.”

“But he could make things very unpleasant for both of you—for all of us—if he chose to. You know that.” Her brow was puckered with a worried frown.

215

He became impatient. “Well, what are you trying to advise, Evelyn? That I should abandon my work here because Uncle Gregory, when he arrives, may disapprove of the manner in which I’ve been doing it? Or that I should give up Cornelia to avoid a possible controversy?”

“I don’t exactly know, Chester. That’s just why I wanted to talk with you. I do dread a row for both our sakes, and I thought perhaps ... well, I don’t know.... Do you think we could keep your engagement a secret from him?”

“I certainly do not,” he returned. “Neither Cornelia nor I would consent to that; it would look underhanded, or as if we were afraid of someone.... My dear Evelyn, the best thing we can do is not sit here trying to cross bridges that we may never reach, but wait until he comes, and see how he takes it. If he doesn’t like it, we’ll tell him firmly but politely that we can exist without his blessing. On the other hand, he may very well give it; in which case, you’ve suffered all these apprehensions for nothing.”

“I only hope that your optimistic view of it is justified, Chester,” she sighed.

Though Hungerford would not admit it, he, too, was convinced that there was at least an unpleasant interview in store for him, following the Bishop’s arrival.

216

CHAPTER XXIV.

LADY CORNELIA'S PREJUDICE

HUNGERFORD well knew that there was trouble ahead for him, yet he reveled in the wonder and the beauty of these days. He could scarcely compass the thought that she loved him—actually loved him as he did her—and had consented to give herself forever into his keeping. As he had told her, he could not put the miracle into words. His whole being seemed filled with a delightful sensation. He felt a strange new love of life, a thrill at the appearance of the morning sun, a quiver at the note of the thrush, a constant prayer for her complete recovery and everlasting love.

Her illness seemed to have softened her, made her more gently feminine—or it may have been that miracle worker, *love*. She was eager to enter into all of his interests, willing to look at things now through his eyes. She had even become reconciled to his fondness for Hilda and experiments with the apes, since the white ape's brave efforts to rescue her, though she could not entirely conquer the repugnance she felt toward any member of the simian species.

217

Hilda had returned to her old life at Hungerford's shack. But where she had before sought his companionship, as an affectionate dog might do, she now kept herself meekly in the background and adopted more nearly the actual position of housemaid which Lady Cornelia had jokingly ascribed to her. She no longer even took her meals with Hungerford except when he made a point of bidding her to do so. There was something pathetic in her voluntary resignation of what she had formerly regarded as her rights.

On one of Hungerford's visits Lady Cornelia mentioned Hilda, asking several interesting questions about her which encouraged him to suggest that, when he came again on the morrow, he might bring her with him.

The patient had now recovered beyond the point where Miss Knowles' care was necessary, and as the hospital at Entebbe, with its limited staff, greatly needed her, the nurse was returned to her duties there. Her departure

from the Post had been arranged for the day on which Hungerford called with Hilda.

Lady Evelyn asked him if he could recommend a native woman to attend her sister for a week or two, saying by way of explanation:

“Cornelia no longer needs any nursing, but she does need someone all day to fetch things for her, sit

218

and fan her, bring her water and do things like that. The regular servants have all they can do and I don’t like to trust a stranger. I’ve found that these black women are inordinately curious, as well as slippery-fingered; one can’t turn one’s back without their picking up something.”

“You might try Hilda,” Hungerford half playfully suggested. “She could certainly do as much for one’s comfort as any of the untrained native women.”

“Are you serious?” Lady Cornelia smiled. “If you do wish to lend her to me, I believe I’ll take her. I’m getting dreadfully bored, sitting here day after day with nothing to divert me. And then,” she concluded with amusement, “it will be such a pleasant surprise for Uncle Gregory when he arrives.”

Hungerford looked at Hilda, who had been standing solemnly by his side, looking inquiringly from one speaker to another. “Would you like to stay and wait upon Lady Cornelia for a few days, Hilda?” he questioned.

Humbly she raised her ape eyes to his and said: “Me sta—.”

“Fine! That’s a nice thing for you to do, to show that you and Lady Cornelia are thoroughly good friends now,” he replied. “And it will be a pleasant change for you, too, won’t it, Hilda?”

219

“Me sta—she announced quietly, ignoring the question.

“The creature is uncanny!” Cornelia exclaimed, staring at Hilda. Then doubtfully added: “I suppose it’s all right for her to stay here now? You think we may trust her?”

Hilda’s eyes travelled again to the speaker’s face, and became scornful. But she remained silent. So far had her evolution carried her since the day of the tea party at the missionary’s home.

Lady Cornelia found herself studying Hilda with constantly growing amazement. Her good opinion of the white ape grew steadily. If Hilda did

not bring love to her duties, she at least served the English woman with unwavering loyalty, until those in the house learned to have the same confidence in her that Hungerford had.

Hungerford's fiancée possessed a beautiful voice, and sometimes sang to her own or Evelyn's accompaniments, now that she was regaining her former strength and ambition. Hilda's love for all music was intense, and on these occasions she always sat listening with the most evident appreciation.

Lady Cornelia was deeply prejudiced against apes, and was not prepared to accept the half of Hungerford's theories concerning their intelligence. But she

220

could now understand why Hungerford had formed his conclusions, with Hilda and her brothers, of whom he had told her, as daily companions of his. These, however, must be decided exceptions. Again she shuddered as she thought of the other apes on that terrible night when it had seemed to her that the fiends of hell were let loose.

As yet she was unable to root out her prejudices in connection with this question and face it with the generously open mind of her fiancé. But she would keep on trying.

"What is the *one* great difference between man and animal?" she asked herself.... "The moral sense," she decided after careful thought. "Our moral sense enables us to distinguish between right and wrong, between good and evil. We have a conscience, a sense of duty, an appreciation of the difference between honesty and dishonesty. We understand the meaning of chastity, modesty, magnanimity, disinterestedness. Animals know nothing of these things—even the highest of them."

"Yet, what of Hilda?" came the answering thought. Upon reflection she had to admit that of every one of those qualities her ape companion had displayed an understanding, or at any rate, an observance. Could her acts all be dismissed with the old term *instinct*? Hardly! And what did instinct mean, anyway?

221

It was no explanation, in any case. It was just another word, like intuition and consciousness and character, and other labels by which we pretend to explain human acts.

“Hilda,” she reflected further, “has exhibited, more than once in the short time that she has been with me, a sense of right and wrong equal to a human being’s; and has shown understanding in countless ways. She has shown reason, as when she was fanning me last evening, and noticed that a breeze was blowing on us through the open window. She stopped using the fan and let the breeze cool me, until it died down later. Then she took up the fan again of her own accord. She showed self-sacrifice, one of the supposedly highest human emotions, by saving my life that night when her own was in greater danger.”

Think as she would, Lady Cornelia could find no respect in which Hilda fell short of the lower natives in humanness; and in some ways her understanding and motives seemed to rise considerably above theirs. Then was Hilda not entitled to be counted *human* also?

“But that’s nonsense!” she exclaimed to herself. “I should have a social club for the monkeys! How the ape tribe would applaud me if they knew my thoughts ... Ape’s human! Oh, I’m mad. Chester

222

must have hypnotized me! But it’s Hilda herself who is forcing me to these conclusions.... Then has she, as Chester thinks, a soul? Outrageous! I must be delirious again!”

The subject was too much for her. In any case, whatever in the way of humanness she was prepared to concede to the white ape, she certainly did not include the rest of the apes in her estimate of Hilda.

But that was not reasonable either. God does not violate the law of nature to create a unique creature. He never has violated the law. Why should He be supposed to have done so here? It was much more reasonable to suppose that Hilda was a genius of her tribe and that there were others like her. She might be exceptional in development as an ape—a Marie Bashkirtseff among simians—but only folly could assume that she was an especially created freak, unlinked in the scheme of things to any group. What she had done, had become, other apes would do also, in time and under favorable conditions. This seemed the logical conclusion.

During all of Lady Cornelia’s bewildering reflections Hilda had been calmly fanning her. The anxious expression on Hilda’s face caused Lady Cornelia to decide to put her reasoning powers to another test. Speaking in a quiet, normal tone, and accompanying

223

her words with no illustrative gestures, she said: "I'm thirsty, Hilda. Will you bring me a glass of water?"

Promptly Hilda arose and went into the adjoining wash-room. Presently she returned with the filled glass. No servant could have discharged the duty more satisfactorily. There was no mistake about her ability to understand those things which had been shown her, and perhaps much more.

Lady Cornelia tried again. "I want some chocolates, Hilda. They are in that red box on the table." But she did not point.

Hilda's eyes sought the table. She saw the box, but made no move. She remembered that Major Hoskins had forbidden the patient to eat sweets for the present, and Lady Evelyn had said, "Hilda, you must not let her have any candy."

"Sick." Hilda now reminded her, and with a few expressive gestures refused to obey her orders. It was clear that she remembered Lady Evelyn's words, and that she had a sense of duty—and more, of responsibility—while caring for her charge.

Lady Cornelia was astounded and looked at her with wonder and speculation. Unconsciously, she spoke her words aloud: "You're a marvel, Hilda.... Why did you save my life, anyway, after showing when we first met that you didn't like me? And now

224

why do you care for me and give me such faithful attention?"

Hilda stopped wielding the big palm-leaf fan. Her lips moved, and gave forth the sound of just two words ... !

Lady Cornelia hesitated; a strange, uncanny shiver ran down her spinal column. Was her mind playing her a trick in thinking that Hilda had answered, "For him?" She turned pale. Perhaps she had been mistaken but Hilda's humanness was inexplicable!

She preferred not to ask her questions again.

225

CHAPTER XXV.

HILDA TAKES A GREAT STEP

BISHOP Braithwaite had not yet arrived. By the time he reached Rambunda Lady Cornelia would be all but entirely recovered. This happy issue none had foreseen—had scarcely even dared hope for—when word had been sent to him to come.

Knowing the anxiety which he must be feeling, Captain Norton had sent the Bishop a telegram to Mombasa stating that Lady Cornelia was now out of danger, and this he would get immediately upon landing. The Captain had even arranged, in addition, for a wireless message to the same effect to be sent from the port, in the hope of its reaching the ship upon which Bishop Braithwaite was sailing.

Lady Cornelia had never been in the Mission during any of the services, but expressed a wish to attend the next one, as she was now able to go out again. She no longer needed even the ministrations of Hilda, who had lately returned to Hungerford's home. He suggested that his bride-to-be come to the service on the following Sunday morning, when several new converts were to be baptized. As neither Captain

226

Norton nor his wife cared to accompany her, when Sunday morning arrived, Colonel Trevor did the honors.

Hungerford's clerical difficulties did not decrease as the days went by. His congregation had the intellects of five-year-olds combined with the savage impulses of wild animals. To them all religion meant an elaborate system of taboo, demanding fetishes, charms and barbarous ceremonies to ward off hoodoo and evil spirits, and they could not separate these ideas and customs from their notions of Christianity, even when they had uncomprehendingly professed conversion.

Their belief in a Supreme Being could not extend, even in the case of the most zealous converts, beyond a childish conception of some fabulous deity who had created the world and then "sat down on the job," powerless now, or indifferent, in the matter of controlling the machinations of the

horde of evil spirits which hovered in the unseen, bent upon visiting misfortunes upon the people in varying degrees. Every mishap was attributed to the malice of these spirits, never to the action of natural laws, and every sort of hocus-pocus was resorted to in order to appease them.

Hungerford had known, since his first few weeks at the Mission, that it was out of the question to follow

227

the ritual of the Church of England in preaching to the natives. The little success that he had achieved had been due to his decision to modify the custom according to the circumstances.

Lady Cornelia and Colonel Trevor sat in chairs upon the little platform and watched the arrival of the natives. A good many more than the usual number came today, out of curiosity to witness the baptism, which they regarded a good deal in the light of an exhibition and celebration.

The big, brutish head of a family arrived riding packaback upon the bowed shoulders of his tottering wife. Humiliated by her weakness, he gave her a stimulating slap or kick every other yard of the way as they neared the Mission. He did not care to be shamed by her incapacity before all his brethren!

Another important tribal functionary came in a rude palanquin, decorated with gaudy calico curtains, and borne by four minor wives, while the first wife had the honor of walking by his side and keeping off the insects with a large fan of undyed ostrich feathers. Just as they entered the place of worship he felt obliged to administer a disciplinary kick in the region of her abdomen, for in momentary negligence, while she stared at Lady Cornelia, she had allowed a fly to settle upon his august brow.

The white woman gasped when Colonel Trevor

228

assured her that all these cruel men were good church members, whose saintliness had so far progressed that they had promised Hungerford never again to beat even the least deserving of their wives into insensibility, but to confine themselves to such gentle corrective measures as she had just witnessed. Lady Cornelia's reflections, particularly her mental pictures of what she would like to see done to the two church members, were distressingly unchristian at this point.

Familiarity had gradually forced Hungerford to endure some of these sights with “the calmness of despair.” His mind had vaulted the distance for a moment, to carry him back to the dignified service at old St. Giles, and he was seated at the little melodeon, reminiscently playing Bach’s St. Anne prelude.... It smote Lady Cornelia’s ears with a strange sense of unreality. She had last heard it in Rome, rolling forth in swelling peals from the great organ of St. Peter’s, amidst all the pompous beauty of vested Roman Catholicism. And now as the notes issued squeakily from a wheezy little melodeon here in the African forest, in the midst of a company of disorderly, undevout, naked blacks, the contrast struck her so forcibly that for several seconds, she was sure that she must be dreaming; that this was all part of a fantastic nightmare.

229

The grinning, voluble crowd continued to pour into the clearing. There was no keeping them silent. For them it was a holiday, a picnic. Fourteen old women hobbled in, cackling among themselves in their absurd sounding dialect and looking like so many replicas of the Witch of Endor. Soon afterwards their husband arrived. The old man was frothing with rage because they had left him to walk instead of doing their wifely duty by carrying his rheumatic form to the Mission. Apparently they had all united to defy him, and secure in the knowledge that he could not beat them before the White Preacher, they dared to cast glances of half veiled malignance and derision in his direction.

Then came a great Negress by herself, arrayed in purple calico and wearing a string of beads and an astonishing headdress of red and green parrot feathers.

She was obviously a person of consequence, and, noting the envious stares and remarks of the other women when this one appeared, Lady Cornelia asked the Colonel if he knew the rank of the newcomer. Surely she must be some tribal queen! Yet, if so, why was she unescorted?

Colonel Trevor appeared embarrassed, and now was framing some evasive reply, when Rimpano, who occupied a front seat, leaned forward and volunteered the information: “She heap proud—give herself

230

big airs—’cause she once live with white man.” Despite her sophistication, Lady Cornelia felt herself coloring with confusion. “What next,” she

wondered, “in this inconceivable place of worship?”

The service began with a hymn:

“Jesus shall reign where’er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

All sang, but few knew the words, and practically none the tune. It reminded Lady Cornelia of a group of howling animals in a zoo at feeding time.

Hungerford followed the hymn with a much abridged form of the morning prayer, and then gave them as the subject of his sermon the simple text, “Hatred stirreth up strife, but love covereth all sins.” He talked to them as simply as possible about loving one another as, he told them, their Father in Heaven loved them. They must cease fighting among themselves, and boasting of their superiority.

“We are all like the worms that crawl on the ground in the eyes of the Almighty,” he affirmed, and one of the women asked incredulously:

“Not our Big Chief too?”

Interruptions were constant. At first Hungerford

231

had striven to impress it upon them that they should at least keep quiet during the prayers and sermon. But he found it hopeless to enforce the injunction, and when he had succeeded for one or two Sundays in keeping them relatively quiet through fear of punishment, they had sat like so many clods, uninterested and unresponsive, their thoughts obviously elsewhere. So at length he had decided that it would be better to let their childlike impulses have play, for when they made remarks and asked questions, he knew that at least he had their attention, and hoped that they might in this way gain some new idea and possible enlightenment on a troublesome point to carry home with them.

Lady Cornelia attracted so much attention and audible comment that she became embarrassed. When the missionary emphasized in his talk the wickedness of wife-beating, one of the men pointed to her, with blissful unconsciousness of bad manners, and inquired:

“You’ m no beat her?”

The white woman did not know where to look, and Hungerford, whose face had suddenly turned red, answered: "The lady is not my wife." He did not think it necessary to add that she was to be.

The man persisted: "You'm no beat your *ape Hilda*?" And Hungerford's confusion was complete.

232

... Suddenly the ludicrousness of the African's philosophy dawned upon him and he laughed aloud.

He would not have minded so much if Lady Cornelia had not been present. Nevertheless, he tried to hold his poise, and with a good deal of simple dignity, for which his fiancée admired him more than he had any idea, he made another attempt to explain:

"God will not love you—He will punish you—if you beat your wives, and the white men will have no use for you. It is wicked and not good to hurt those who are weaker and cannot help themselves. The white man's Bible tells us that a man must love his wife and care for her when she is sick and when she is well and treat her nice like a friend. White man never beat his wife."

But the native urged, "If me no beat my wives, they think me weak woman-man, scared of them."

Before Hungerford could remonstrate further, another man asked him, "Why you no got but one ape Hilda servant? You got heap money—why you no buy fine white woman there?"

And an interesting Negress, who had been admiring Lady Cornelia's clothes, seized the opportunity to ask her: "How many goats you worth?"

This was a compliment, if the Englishwoman had but known it. The questioner inferred that such a

233

wonderful looking and elegant appareled white woman must be worth more than beads and bring a high price in the matrimonial market.

Lady Cornelia, uncertain whether to ignore the query or attempt to make a reply, was relieved by Hungerford's quick and forceful intervention. "You must ask questions only about the church and yourselves; things that will help you to understand about Christianity."

One of the women, who was to be baptized that day, then put a question that had been giving her much concern. Extending a black leg, guiltless of

any array save a brass anklet, she asked: “You think when me die, Lord Jesus let me in Heaven if me give him this...? Me got nothing else.”

“Jesus does not ask you for gifts. Give Him your heart. That is all He wants.” Hungerford reassured her.

He was again interrupted by a burly African near the front who wanted to know: “Do Lord Jesus eat hearts? Me think you say it wicked to be cannibal.”

Hungerford cast a quizzical, despairing glance in the direction of Lady Cornelia and Colonel Trevor. He was encountering even more snags than usual this morning. Having cleared up this point with considerable difficulty, he injudiciously asked:

234

“Now, are there any more questions?”

And immediately an elderly native arose and complained: “Me big son get smart when him make Christian. Him wash himself all time now—take bath in river and wash all bugs off with white man’s soap. Him no need wife to scratch him’s back no more. No want to live with us. You make him too damn fine.”

Hungerford found it no easy matter to pacify the man. Always he knew that he dared not give way too much to the laughter he felt within. If he did they would never again have taken him seriously, and the little ground he had gained would be lost. As for Lady Cornelia, she was finding it more and more impossible to preserve the reverential mien of one attending divine service.

Next spoke a young native whom the missionary had persuaded to enter the church and recently induced to give up his father’s skull—the most sacred of all barbaric fetishes—as proof of the youth’s surrender of native superstitions. The convert was vehemently expostulatory. He had heard from Rimpano that Hungerford was going to keep the skull and proposed eventually to take it with him to England, as a souvenir, and he argued strenuously:

“My father’s buried here. If you take him’s head

235

away cross big waters, when him rise up on last big Judgment Day and want to go to Heaven, him no can get him’s head.”

Lady Cornelia muffled a laugh with her handkerchief, pretending to cough. The missionary was confronted with many difficulties in explaining to the childish mind of the native. But finally he satisfied him by promising not to take the head away, and to have it buried on the morrow by the father's body. Promptly another stood up to voice a grievance. But Hungerford, knowing that if he allowed the arguments and inquiries to continue they would all still be there at sundown, was forced to tell the man to save his story for another occasion, as the new converts had yet to be baptized.

Hesitatingly they came forward, half frightened, some unduly solemn, others giggling foolishly. Though none of them would be accepted for confirmation under a period of two years in which to prove their earnestness of purpose, Hungerford thought it was wise to baptize them as soon as they expressed a wish to enter the church. He was aware of the natives' love of ceremony, and knew that the rite tended to hold them, satisfied that baptism had made them Christians, when they might otherwise soon have forgotten their protestations of conversion. They had been given Bibles translated into their own

236

dialects, and if they could not read, there were held for them, at the Mission, reading classes at which some of the converts read aloud in their own tongue.

This morning Hungerford did his best to make clear to them once more the meaning of baptism, and the idea that no one who had not received this sacrament could be saved, according to the teachings of the church. He spoke of the comfort of being "received into the congregation of Christ's flock;" of how it eased all burdens and helped one to combat more steadfastly the sins and temptations of the world, and expressed the hope that there were others who would soon take the first step forward towards their souls' salvation.

As his deep, impressive voice quoted the invitation, those words of the Master: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," several came forward self-consciously and knelt on the edge of the platform, signifying that they were ready to be received into the bosom of the church.

And then a little white figure stole from her hidden position behind Lady Cornelia and the Colonel, and took a place at the platform's edge, kneeling

beside the rest. It was Hilda.

Sitting upon her accustomed cushion by the melodeon,

237

she had been listening as usual to the service. She had remained so still that Hungerford had quite forgotten her presence. No one was more astonished by her action than he. It was the first time she had in any way made herself conspicuous during a service.

He looked down at her, wondering anew. What did her action signify? Was it mere ape imitativeness, or was it an actual response to his words? He glanced from Hilda to Lady Cornelia. She was staring at the white ape's kneeling form with a sort of horrified fascination. Colonel Trevor was pulling his mustache and looking uncomfortable. The natives, especially those beside whom Hilda had taken her place, seemed less surprised than the whites.

For once Hungerford was at a total loss as to what to do. He looked down at Lady Cornelia, but found no inspiration there; then back to Hilda, kneeling patiently at the end of the row of the blacks. Finally he leaned over and spoke to her in a low voice:

"Hilda, you must not play now. This is not a game. It is something that I—don't think—you can understand.... You'd better go back where you were sitting, and wait until we are through here."

She lifted her piquant little face to his, and he saw that she was, at any rate, not trying to play at any game. Her eyes held nothing of the twinkling mischief

238

that he always saw when she was playing, or when she knew that she had cleverly mimicked some action of his or another's.

There was, if he could define it, entreaty in her eyes. Then she put up an appealing hand and caught his fingers. Whatever she meant, she was evidently desperately in earnest. Could it be true that she did understand, though remotely, the meaning of what was offered here? He was stunned by the thought. Here seemed to be evidence that outstripped his theories. He felt as if he had, like Frankenstein, raised a being that had suddenly grown beyond his feeble power to direct.

There are desires that have grown with the development of the world; there are longings that persist through the ages. Before the altar of the

lowest savage his whispered yearnings ascend to the Veiled Mystery. The aspiration for something higher and better, the instinct for truth and perfection of being are as inevitable as hunger and thirst, as deeply rooted as love, as primal as the desire for life. Who knows what beings are too lowly to feel their first promptings?

Such reflections determined Hungerford's decision in this crisis. He would give Hilda the benefit of the doubt. If he erred he would err, he believed, on the right side.

239

Addressing the last converts, he said simply: "To you who have come this morning to be received into God's Holy Church I give you welcome and blessing in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. If you want to be baptized now, you shall be, with the others. A number of you are not prepared to answer for yourselves, but your people will speak for you."

All of those to receive baptism belonged to families of which some members had already joined the church, and at Hungerford's direction the latter approached to stand as sponsors. Then he turned to his friends, and asked firmly:

"Lady Cornelia will you and Colonel Trevor sponsor Hilda? You have seen her signify her earnest desire to join these others."

At his words, Colonel Trevor sprang to his feet unbelievably, and Lady Cornelia started as if she had received a physical blow.

"Chester!" she cried in a low but frightened tone—"are you mad?"

"I trust not, Cornelia. I believe that in this instance it will be doing the right thing, and I'm going to do it." There was simple conviction in this statement.

"Baptize a *monkey*—in the Church of England! ... You are mad!" she wailed. "Your preposterous hobby has turned your brain."

240

Many things were flashing through his mind. He did not reply but stood waiting quietly to hear anything further she might have to say.

White to the lips, she breathed in quivering tones: "I demand that you carry this outrage no further. It is an infamous sacrilege!"

Colonel Trevor was striving to check, in the church and in her presence, the profanity that struggled to burst forth in support of his amazed anger.

There was an instant of tense silence during which the black congregation stared at the three, not comprehending the situation. But the tones and manners of the speakers made it plain that something of moment was occurring, and it took but half an eye to see that it had reference to Hilda.

“Why make a fuss about her?” was the thought in most of their minds. The white ape had come to church time and time again, and she was just as good as they.

As for Hilda herself, she still knelt in position, but her anxious look flitted from one face to another. Rimpano seemed greatly disturbed.

When Hungerford replied to his fiancée, he spoke without visible emotion, but his voice sounded to her as if it were enforced with a rib of steel. “You *demand*? ... I am not certain that I shall accede to

241

your demand, but this is a matter in which I can be accountable only to my God and conscience. I don’t think that He is regarding it as a sacrilege. Hilda has surely shown us her sincerity, and while she may not entirely understand....”

Lady Cornelia was about to speak again; but before she had formed the words, her lips closed in a line as grim as his, and turning to Colonel Trevor, she indicated that she desired him to take her home. Without giving Hungerford a chance to finish, or even say a word, she left the Mission.

Though Hungerford remained outwardly self-possessed, it was with a considerable effort that he pulled himself together when they had gone, and tried to decide upon the best thing to do under the circumstances.

Then Rimpano asked him: “You’*m* want me to stand sponsor for Hilda and baptize her?”

“Yes,” was all he said.

The servant had long ago become a member of the church and at times had assisted him in baptizing the natives. The friendly support indicated by the offer was the stimulus the missionary needed in this trying new experience and moment of depression. He thanked Rimpano gratefully.

Composedly then he baptized each native in turn,

242

sprinkling them with the water from a plain white bowl that stood upon the little table before him. Hilda was the last, and as he came to her he handed

the bowl to Rimpano who baptized her.

As the drops fell upon her bowed head and the words which were repeated in parrot fashion upon her groping consciousness, “Hilda, I baptize thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” did the God invoked look down in rage upon a blasphemy, or did He throw back His kingly head and laugh in a jovial derision, or did He nod in kindly sympathy and understanding? Surely if He be indeed “the dear God who loveth us,” who “made and loveth *all*,” He must have understood.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HILDA RETURNS TO THE FOREST

IF HILDA had really attempted to span the gulf between her people and Hungerford's, the understanding had not succeeded. It had been fraught with difficulties and sacrifices, which even Hungerford only partially understood. Such an understanding between the two, so far as it went, was largely a matter of intuition, for through actual spoken language they had communicated but little. Yet through something—perhaps the yearning on her side to grasp his meanings, and the reciprocal hope on his that he might discover the spiritual secret of her kind—the gulf had been partially bridged between man and animal. And so far her yearning had not been wasted.

Soon after her baptism, Hungerford became somehow seized with the feeling that Hilda was contemplating leaving him again, and going back to her tribe—this time forever. She had done nothing to indicate such an intention, and perhaps the decision was not yet clear even in her own mind. But questions had been lurking there unformed, or half formed, for some time. Like the Maid of Orleans, when she first heard voices, something seemed to have inspired Hilda

244

to go forth as the leader of her people. She seemed to have heard a call which she must obey. They now needed her guidance.

Her tribe, already small, was each year growing smaller. They did not know how best to preserve and raise the clan to power. And in the recent battle with the men a number of the strongest males had been killed, leaving it weaker than ever. She could help them, and must go to them. It mattered not that they had treated her unkindly and shown her no welcome when she had returned to them in her unhappiness. The tribal need was greater, more important, than her own. And by virtue of her rank, she was the rightful one to show them the way to greater progress. If at first they should again spurn her, she must endure it until they had themselves awakened to their need of her.

Those apes who had seen her in the tent on the night of their attack had been slain. The survivors, who did not know that she had been in the men's camp, could have no suspicion that she had warned the humans on that occasion. She owed them reparation for that also. It had been an act that was against all the laws of her tribe. Yet what else could she have done? She could not have let them kill her master and the one he loved.

She knew definitely now, from talk which she had

245

overheard at the Post, that it had been Telford who had shot the young chimpanzee that day, the white man who was always going forth with the terrible weapon to kill. It was not just that her people should kill many men because one man had sinned against them. She had done right to save the innocent. But she grew sad when she remembered the dead bodies of her people lying there after the fight.

Little of all this may have passed through Hilda's mind in a process of logical reasoning. Neither did Jeanne d'Arc plan and arrange, with an intellectual appreciation of the necessity of France, to lead her country to victory. It was intuition, inspiration, which first prompted the peasant girl to act. So it was with Hilda now. Some force beyond the searchings of her poor mind was leading her in this direction.

She was more than ever self-effacing. It was as if she felt that fate had brought her back to the missionary's home once more, not for her own happiness, but to complete her preparation for the work ahead of her.

Then came the day when the messengers arrived from the forest to tell her that her grandfather, the old white-bearded king was dead, and that she had become the queen of the tribe. Would she return to rule them?

246

She knew it was not because they wanted her, but hers was the first right to the place, and only if she renounced it forever and declared her intention of remaining with the humans, could another, according to the tribal laws, be appointed ruler. So far as Hilda was concerned, there was no choice in the matter. That which instinct had foretold had now come to pass.

She bade the two messengers go back and tell her people to await her coming. Very soon she would rejoin them, but she must have a little time for her leave-taking. The interview took place on the border of the clearing, whither the messengers had come and called to her from the shelter of the

plantains. They would approach no nearer to the human king's domain; so she had gone out to meet them.

Now that the time had come, it was even harder to leave than she had thought. She had put off going from day to day, from week to week, but it could be delayed no longer.

Hungerford knew nothing of the messengers, but he had been watching Hilda closely during the last few days. Once he saw her, through the doorway of the little shed room which Rimpano had built for her at the side of the shack, kneeling beside her bed, her head buried in her arms. She was quite motionless, and he had passed by without disturbing her,

247

wondering if she were praying, or weeping. The attitude suggested prayer, but even now that seemed impossible.

When Rimpano brought his tea to him that afternoon beneath the tamarind tree, she poured it for him as usual, and then sat down by him. Her chin rested in her hands, with her elbows propped on her knees; and her worshipping eyes never left his face. When he suggested that she have her bowl of milk and the tea cakes that she liked so well, she refused.

"Go—me," at last she told him.

He felt no surprise that she was going. Her telling him only confirmed what he had already seemed to know. Had she been aware of the great sense of loss which he felt with the certainty of her departure, she might have been tempted still to linger. But he did not seek to dissuade her from going, for it was outside the province of either of them to alter the course of events. And he realized, too, that all was for the best.

She made him understand in her poor way why she was returning to her people. "Me he'p." It was then that he recognized the full extent of her development. She had seemed terribly human when her love for him had been revealed by Rimpano. She had gone further when she had been able to put herself aside and save for him the woman he loved. She had even

248

left her mate—her ape husband—something previously unknown in her ape world, breaking their most forbidden law. And now she was giving up all that remained to her of personal happiness, the chance of being near and serving the great white preacher, whom she had once thought would forever protect her people. But this had to be done if she was to live and labor only

for the uplifting of her race. The ape world, with all its wild ways, had no charm for her. No human self-sacrifice could be beyond the one she was making.

He thought of Undine and the mission which had brought her from the sea to seek a soul. And as Hilda put her tiny human-like hand into his for the last time he called her by that name.

“Undine! poor little Undine of the apes! You have found your soul at last. And you will come back to see me sometimes, Hilda?” he asked as her hand lingered in his.

She lifted her face to his, the wistful little face with tragic eyes which had so often reminded him of a pansy. It wrinkled tremulously as she answered: “Maybe.” Then she turned to go.

But at the gate of the stockade something seemed to hold her. An instant’s pause, and she rushed back to him, patted his hand and kissed it so unexpectedly that it was over before he realized what had been

249

done, and she whimpered like a dog and was gone.

He remained sitting there for a long time. The sun sank red behind the tangle of mangroves that grew along the river bank, staining the hot, oily water to blood-orange for a moment before it went. The incessant chatter of the parrakeets, and the splash of a heron diving for a fish at the river’s edge were the only sounds that broke the stillness.

She had passed out of his strange world, back into her own, stranger still.

He had given her all the aid it had been in his power to give. If she did not understand in a human way the things she had been seeking, then surely she understood them by a kind of faith, a gift of the spirit which the Giver of all gifts had bestowed to help her onward.

Even now he had not determined the extent of the potentialities of her kind. But he had been given evidence, with which he was satisfied, that there could be intellect and divinity in the spirit of an ape almost equalling that in a human being.

If he had not succeeded with his work among the natives as he had dreamed of doing when he came out here, he had at least helped one awakening soul to lift itself nearer to an ultimate harmony with its Creator. Perhaps his mission to Africa had been fulfilled. He wondered.

250

CHAPTER XXVII.

BISHOP BRAITHWAITE ARRIVES

Part I

I CAN'T recover from my surprise at finding you well—up and about—and all that,” Bishop Braithwaite told his niece for the fifth time, as he seated himself at the Norton’s luncheon table, his long journey finally completed.

“It seems to disappoint you,” Lady Cornelia laughed.

“No, no, my dear! What a thing to say!” The Bishop was always literal. “But naturally, after the cablegram that I received, I expected to find you in a very grave condition. You really should not have sent me such a cable, Arthur,” he turned to his new nephew-in-law, “and have upset me for weeks. You have no idea how I have suffered; what apprehensions I have had—and all that.” He had a habit of concluding with this phrase whenever inspiration failed. The present remarks were directed, as usual, by his quite unconscious habit of considering every occurrence first as it affected himself.

Again Lady Cornelia answered him, “I didn’t know

251

of their sending for you, Uncle. I should never have thought of letting them summon you to Africa on my account, if I had been able to dictate matters. But you see, I really was in a condition at that time that made them think perhaps I was going to chuck the whole game for a “celestial crown and a pair of wings. They might have known I had too much love of life to do any such thing; but—well, you must remember it’s almost two months, owing to all the delays, since that cablegram was sent. I couldn’t remain an invalid any longer, even to oblige you!”

“I am, of course, profoundly thankful for your recovery. It is an answer to my prayers. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that my journey has been all for nothing.” An aggrieved note crept unawares into the Bishop’s voice.

Arthur Norton spoke now, somewhat sharply. "Would you have felt it was worthwhile if you had arrived to find Cornelia dying, and yourself just in time to administer the last rites? Your attitude is, I think, absurd and unbecoming."

The naturally high color of the Bishop deepened, as it always did when something put him upon more than his usual dignity. "Your attitude leaves much to be desired, Arthur," was his chilling rejoinder.

Evelyn murmured something conciliatory to her

252

uncle and something in the nature of a rebuke to her husband, and the luncheon proceeded without further unpleasantness.

Over the fruit his Lordship expanded once more to a state of urbanity. "After my siesta—I am really very much fatigued—you must tell me everything about your illness and injury, Cornelia; just how it occurred—and all that. For the moment, however, it is enough for me to know that you have entirely recovered. That comes before everything." And he frowned at Captain Norton in a manner that seemed to impute his own unreasoning attitude to his nephew.

"... And now, what is this I hear about Chester Hungerford?" he inquired. "I met the Bishop of Mombasa—he asked me to dine on the evening that I landed. I gather that Chester, from all accounts, is simply doing as he pleases here, even as he did at home. At least, there are rumors—and all that ... I understand that the Bishop of Uganda has been intending to look into the matter."

"It's true that Chester has been taking tremendous liberties," Evelyn began fussily. "I really don't know what to think of his behavior, especially in that last business, when he ----" Catching the warning eye of her sister, she let her sentence hang hazily in midair for a moment; then drifted into a comparatively

253

safe, if unenlightening, conclusion: "Well, he seems to become more and more—erratic—as time goes on."

"Will you ask him to dinner tomorrow night, Evelyn?" requested the Bishop. "I can't say that I look forward to seeing him again—now. But before matters go any further here in the hands of his bishop, I feel it my

duty to have a serious talk with him—for his own good ... yes, a serious talk.”

Part II

Hungerford had not seen Lady Cornelia since the Sunday when Rimpano baptized Hilda. He had sent her a note on the following day, asking when he might call and talk with her about the matter, and had not been encouraged by her reply.

“I have been terribly shocked and wounded by your conduct,” she had written, “and I’d rather not see you at present. I realize that we must have a talk and thrash this thing out, but I am not ready for it yet. I prefer to wait until my anger and indignation have quite subsided, and your sanity has perhaps returned. Then we shall be less apt to indulge in irrelevant recriminations. When I feel that I can talk about it quietly and to the point I’ll let you know.”

To this end he had sent her another line, expressing regret that he had offended her, but not apologizing for what he had done, and saying that he would

254

be at her service whenever she would send for him.

He had kept away from the home of the Nortons in the meantime, and had not even gone to the Post to meet the Bishop. Though he had felt his absence to be discourteous, he persuaded himself that it was, after all, excusable, insomuch as Bishop Braithwaite had come to Rambunda primarily to see his niece.

On the morning after the Bishop’s arrival, Hungerford had an errand which took him to the native village, and while there he met one of his favorite converts, a simple but earnestly striving man. The native stopped to ask him about Hilda, in whom he had always shown a deep interest.

“Rimpano say Hilda leave you—go back to her tribe,” he said questioningly.

Hungerford admitted regretfully that such was the case, and mentioned her purpose in doing so.

“Hilda much smart,” said the native admiringly; “she smart an’ as good as my wife. So smart ape me never see. She sure come back to Mission sometime. Want learn more. Me never kill apes no more—since Hilda join

our church; she make ape folk our friends. Hilda good Christian now, like all church members in our tribe. Us all go to Heaven some day, an' Hilda be first ape in Heaven."

Hungerford's expression brightened. "You believe

255

that Hilda can be a Christian and go to Heaven, do you?" he asked this poor ignorant black. He wanted encouragement, something outside of himself to support his trust.

" 'Course, yes," the other responded readily. "Why not? Bible say God love everybody, everything that live. Then why He no love apes? Why take black man in Heaven and leave out white ape?"

The man's simple reasoning was comforting to the missionary. It expressed, even though in the crudest sort of way, the logic which must be the basis of any true religion, that if God be the Father of *all*, as the theologians glibly assert, it is an inconsistency and an absurdity to claim that He rewards some of his creatures for lives well spent and damns others equally blameless.

Hungerford had often considered this point, and he agreed with the African that the God they worshipped could be no such unjust, capricious Being.

256

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HUNGERFORD MEETS AN ARGUMENT

THE last mail had brought Hungerford a letter from the Bishop of Uganda, delicately intimating that matters at Rambunda were not quite satisfactory to him and that he was contemplating a visit to the Post in the near future, to see both the missionary and Bishop Braithwaite, of whose arrival he had just learned.

Hungerford sighed. The anticipated strictures were already threatening. He knew that it would not be at all easy to defend some of his actions—thoroughly defensible as they were from his own viewpoint—before the united forces of the two ecclesiastics.

He did not contemplate with relish the invitation sent to him by a messenger, to dine with the Nortons—and Bishop Braithwaite—this evening. He could have faced the disagreeable task with more tranquillity if he had had his talk with Lady Cornelia, and were sure of her intentions toward him now.

It added to his disconcertion upon his arrival to see nothing of his fiancée, and to be told by Evelyn that she had asked them to excuse her for the evening.

257

She was still not feeling very strong, and had decided to dine alone in her room. He knew, of course, that she had merely taken this means of avoiding meeting with him.

The Bishop greeted him with a politeness that was distinctly strained. His Lordship was a poor actor, and though he intended to reserve his talk until later and risk no topics which might affect the enjoyment of his dinner, he found himself plunging into the subject uppermost in his mind even before the salad had been served.

Only four were present—Evelyn, her husband and uncle, and Hungerford. Colonel Trevor, Major and Mrs. Hoskins, and one or two others had been invited to dinner the previous evening to meet the Bishop;

so the second evening of the visit was free for eating and voicing unamiable opinions quite *en famille*.

"I am sorry to hear, Chester," Bishop Braithwaite began, with ponderous reproof in his tone, as he vigorously dug into the succulent combination of avocado and French dressing, "that you are up to your old tricks again."

Hungerford raised his eyebrows. "My old tricks?" he queried curtly.

"Your unfortunate tendency to take liberties with the ritual of the church," the Bishop elucidated with

258

severity. "You must know quite well to what sort of things I'm alluding."

Hungerford demanded uncompromisingly: "Just what accusations do you make?"

"Accusations is too strong a word. It does not at this stage fit the case. But there have been rumors; and...."

"Would you mind being specific as to one of them?"

"Well, I've heard hints from more than one source already that your services here, for example, are—anything but orthodox."

"That much is true," admitted the missionary, "but the conditions are so different from those at home that the idea of attempting a formal service here is—is nothing short of funny. Of course, being entirely unfamiliar with what one has to face here, you can't realize the necessity of taking all sorts of liberties and of sacrificing orthodoxy to the requirements of the moment in dealing with a congregation which is not in many cases even familiar with our language. Doubtless the Bishop of Uganda will see the situation here when he arrives." It was a gentle snub, but it took more than this to make Bishop Braithwaite understand that he should attend to his own business.

"Because you have been in Africa somewhat longer

259

than I, you are not justified in assuming that I know nothing about the country," he returned pompously. "I keep my eyes and ears open wherever I go; and I have been able to observe, even in the comparatively short time I have been here, a great deal ... a very great deal! And one of the things I have observed, my dear Chester, is that the Bishop of Uganda is apparently not in sympathy with your—er methods."

This shot went home! Hungerford had to admit to himself the truth of the statement, and this did not increase his composure. But he only said: "Whatever I've done here, I have tried always to do what I thought best. If I'm at fault ..."

"It is not a question of what you think, best, my dear man," interrupted his Lordship. "It is a question of obeying the laws of the church. There is always a right and a wrong way, and as an ordained clergyman you should experience no difficulties in determining which is which."

Hungerford began to lose patience. "Permit me to say," he answered stiffly, "that the topic you have chosen is one upon which I believe you are uninformed. And you force me to remind you, in plain terms, that I am now under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Uganda."

"Chester!" expostulated Evelyn, who had up to this

260

point remained uneasily silent, concentrating all of her attention upon the sweets, which had now arrived. His Lordship was furiously counting fifty to himself until he should have regained the power to reply in a manner becoming his position.

Arthur Norton defended his other guest without mincing matters. "I don't blame Hungerford for resenting Uncle Gregory's interference, Evelyn. He wouldn't take a hint, and Hungerford has said very properly that he's not answerable to anyone here but the Bishop of this diocese."

Evelyn shrugged a white shoulder. "We seem to be descending to the level of a family row," she said disgustedly. "If you can't have an argument without losing your tempers, perhaps we'd better talk about something safe and dull, like the weather."

By this time the Bishop had recovered his pontifical calm sufficiently to protest with saintly humility: "I had no object in approaching these matters other than a desire to be of some help to you, Chester. I regret that you've placed a wrong interpretation upon my interest in your welfare." And he was able to persuade himself that he was speaking the entire truth.

"Of course," Evelyn came to his support, "Uncle Gregory has only your interest at heart, Chester. We

261

all have. Perhaps you don't know it, but the people here are already beginning to laugh at some of the things you've done; and several are

indignant about them. I'm sure, if you realized this, you wouldn't want to give them any more cause for either laughter or indignation. The whole Post has been up in arms about your actions the other Sunday."

"Mayn't we leave that—and Hilda—out of the conversation for the present, Evelyn?" asked Hungerford constrainedly. "She has gone back to her people again, I suppose you'll be glad to know; and this time for good. So she'll not trouble any of you any more."

"Are you afraid to discuss her before Uncle Gregory?" Evelyn flashed, the little streak of cattishness in her nature momentarily coming to the surface. "You're right in supposing I'm glad to hear that she's gone for good."

"Who is Hilda?" demanded the Bishop.

"Why, she's a pet monkey that Chester had," his niece explained in her own way. "I thought Cornelia wrote you about her?"

"True, she did. And she was able to treat the whole matter with more levity than I can assume. I felt at the time that it was an undignified thing for you to have such pets in your household, Chester. You owe

262

it to your position as a clergyman to consider appearances, and for the sake of your influence upon your parishioners, you should put aside your personal predilections, which, I'll grant you, may be harmless enough in themselves. It is just that point that I am trying to take in regard to *all* of your—er—indiscretions. You have never stopped to consider that you are, in a small way, a public figure, and that you cannot follow your own ideas alone, but must always bear in mind those who are looking to you for example and guidance.... And then see what disastrous results came from your folly in that instance. It was the tribe of apes to which this very pet of yours belonged that attacked all of you, and so nearly caused the death of our dear Cornelia. At least, so Evelyn told me."

"Evelyn did not tell you half the truth then," Hungerford retorted, nettled by the evident injustice of her version of the tale, and ignoring the Bishop's other remarks. What had she not left her uncle to infer? "Hilda had nothing to do with the attack, except, indeed, to save the lives of our entire party indirectly, and of Cornelia directly, by her bravery and loyalty to us. Perhaps Evelyn neglected to tell you *that*. Moreover, the other apes would never have attacked us at all if it had not been for one of our number who indefensibly killed a young ape. These

anthropoids do not attack without provocation, any more than intelligent human beings do.”

“He persists in comparing them with human beings. It’s a subject upon which he’s become a positive fanatic.” Almost unconsciously Evelyn had gone over entirely to the side of the Bishop. Her thoroughly conventional mind needed only a slight supporting pillar upon which to rest her intolerance of anything markedly original.

“I begin to perceive, from things Evelyn and Cornelia have told me, that you’ve been carrying this foolishness further and further since coming here,” deplored the Bishop. “I am sorry, very sorry. You are entirely upon the wrong track. As a broadminded man, I have myself looked into this—er—Darwinism and Haeckelism, and all that—and found it to be entirely erroneous and ridiculous. Why, in certain states in America it is a crime to teach evolution!”

“I have not said that I believe in these theories of evolution,” Hungerford returned a bit warily; “but they seem plausible. I am only trying to find out.”

“These things have all been found out long ago, and settled by the church. You do not have to trouble yourself about them. You have only to believe. Your first duty is to——”

“My first duty is to seek the truth,” interrupted Hungerford, harassed almost to rudeness.

“You *have* the truth.” The Bishop’s voice boomed with righteousness. “Does not our Savior tell us, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life?’ Is that not enough for you?”

“That is a mere figure of speech, as you know,” said Hungerford; “symbolically true as far as it goes, of course. But there are truths that are still hidden.”

“There are truths that are meant to be hidden from the weak eyes of puny mortals. You made vows—protestations of belief—when you entered the church——”

“I am beginning to think I made them blindly, out of the depths of my great ignorance. That is just the fault I have to find with the church. It seeks to hold itself together at all costs, in defiance of reason, of logic, of all

progress. We must not question its assumptions.... Why? ... Because to do so may make the infirm foundations upon which it has been reared grow more shaky still. Its members are expected to be partisans—partisans against enlightenment. Just as certain of its followers are doing in America today—fighting against education! Its arguments, many of them, are *known* to be one-sided. The church makes men ‘religious’ in the same

265

way that the State makes them patriotic. It leads their feelings, emotions, hopes; and leaves their intelligence to follow—if it can.”

Bishop Braithwaite was at loss for words—at least, for words becoming his office—and into the momentary opening Evelyn inserted her wedge of thought: “The principles of the church are infallible. They are—”

“But their applications are not,” Hungerford interrupted again. He was half excited now, flushed with the ardor of combat. “You say—the Bishop says—that the church exists to teach the truth. I say that it cannot teach that truth which it does not know. It has had glimpses of it, now and then, throughout the centuries of its existence—bright rays of inspiration, evidently, at the beginning. But much of that truth has vanished or altered beyond recognition with our evolution. It is like—like man clinging persistently to a candle by which to read today, after we have discovered electric light.”

“We cannot disregard the doctrines of the church,” the Bishop insisted. “They are divinely inspired. We owe loyalty to its traditions.”

“*Traditions!*” Hungerford caught him up. “That is just the word. We are bound by tradition; and that is a sin. It is a *sin*, I tell you! You talk about the ‘Heathen Chinese,’ laboring in the darkness of his

266

ancestor worship; in God’s name I ask you what else are we doing?”

Captain Norton added his mite here. “I don’t think that you are so far apart as you probably imagine,” he suggested placatingly. “Uncle Gregory insists that you must be loyal to the teachings of the church, you, that you must be loyal to the truth. Why can’t the two be one?”

“That is what I have been constantly asking for years and years,” Hungerford asserted. “But I have ceased to ask it now. For I’ve learned that it’s a futile question. The church tells me to study the Bible, and it also tells me to just what conclusions my study must lead. It enslaves my freedom of

thought. You don't seem to see—any of you—that the clergyman's intellectual independence is compromised from the day he enters the ministry.”

The Bishop sat in infringed silence for a full half minute after this declaration. Then he replied heavily: “I refuse to discuss such heresy with you.”

Hungerford said nothing. But Captain Norton objected: “Well, but—Uncle Gregory, if you can't give him any better answer than that, your case is pretty grave, by Jove!”

CHAPTER XXIX.

LADY CORNELIA EXPRESSES HERSELF

HUNGERFORD walked home with worry dogging his footsteps. He had definitely committed himself now, and knew that he could no longer stand still, even for a little while. He must either go back and retract what he had said, or go forward and openly defend his attitude. And he could not retract.

That which distressed him more than anything else was Lady Cornelia's failure to appear at dinner. It indicated all too certainly that her resentment had not yet abated. Before retiring he wrote her a line, which he instructed Rimpano to take to the Post the first thing in the morning, and await an answer:

"I must see you. You are not treating me fairly. Please give me an immediate chance to set myself right with you. We can't go on without an understanding."

This note brought a reply saying she would call upon him that afternoon at his house.

She came alone, except for the escort of a Negro

268

servant. Hungerford greeted her with an attempt at pleasant casualities, but she saw that he was uncomfortable.

"You are just in time for tea." He was doing his masculine best to ease the situation. "I'll tell Rimpano to bring it at once."

"I don't care for tea, thank you. And if you don't mind, I'd rather talk this over without any distraction; I came here instead of asking you to come to the Post so that we might have no interruption."

"It was considerate of you. I think you'll find that chair the most comfortable.... Well, Cornelia, what have you to say to me?"

She had mechanically seated herself in the chair indicated, and was trying to find the right words to state her position. Even now, after her prompting, she did not speak at once.

“What I have to say depends very much upon what you say to me,” she answered at last. “I’m hoping that you’ve repented your rashness and are ready to make reparation.... I don’t mean to me, but to the church, so far as you can.”

“I’m sorry. But my views on the subject haven’t altered, and I don’t think it’s likely that they will.... However, Hilda is gone—I shall in all probability never see her again—and I don’t see why we

269

can’t let this matter rest there. If we can’t agree about it, at least we needn’t let it come between us.”

“But it does come between us—in every way. Can’t you see that, Chester? What has come over you? The mere fact that you could do such a thing makes it impossible for me to trust any longer in your judgment; in your estimate of right and wrong. You simply aren’t the man I thought you were, if you can actually justify such crazy acts to your own mind. And I wanted to marry the man I thought you were, not some erratic stranger.... This thing has compromised your position in the church, if nothing had before. You surely know they’ll do something about this. And what are you going to say when they do? Are you going to try stubbornly to defend it against all the laws of our faith? If so, you must realize what it’s bound to come to.”

“If they want to unfrock me, let them,” he returned with boyish sulkiness. “I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of; nothing that I don’t believe is right.”

“But *how* can you believe that?” Her outthrust hand made a gesture of hopelessness. “To take an animal into the church! Absurd! Preposterous! Why, it’s—it’s unheard of! What excuse have you for doing such a revolutionary thing? What precedent?”

He turned from his restless pacing of the little

270

room to demand almost fiercely: “What precedent had Jesus Christ when he said, ‘Come unto me, all of you’—*all*, mark you—‘for I am the Light of the World’?”

“You are not Christ,” she answered with compressed lips.

“I am a humble follower in his footsteps,” he replied with such simple dignity that she was half ashamed.

“But He was speaking to *people*,” she persisted. “He didn’t mean—”

“How do you know to whom He was speaking? How can you presume to say? I take it that His message was for all of His creatures—for every one of them.”

“But you know”—her tone was despairing—“He could have been speaking only to those who could understand—to thoughtful, reasoning beings.”

“Can you say after having known Hilda that she is not a thoughtful, reasoning being?”

“I certainly don’t think that she is able to grasp the meaning of theology. And for that matter, I don’t think many of the natives are.”

“They can try; and we can’t limit salvation to the educated.”

271

“But the laws of the church—” she began again argumentatively.

“I am far less concerned with the letter of its laws than with the spirit of them.”

“It’s evident that you are not concerned with any laws,” she said coldly.

“Cornelia, are we going to quarrel over this wretched business?” He held out appealing hands.

“Quarrel?—going to? I should say we already *had* quarreled. I agree with you that it is a ‘wretched business.’ But who is responsible for it? I suppose if I’d side with you in every impossible thing you choose to do all would be well. But if I object—we are ‘quarreling’.”

“God knows I have no wish for a breach between us.” He said with dry lips. “I have tried to make my position clear to you.”

“God knows I’ve tried to meet it,” she returned bitterly. “I made every allowance for you. I did my best to put myself in your place, to see things as you see them. When Hilda stayed with me, I perceived her cleverness—her extraordinary cleverness, for an animal, I admit—and I understand how interested you might become in her intelligence and her development. But when you dare to carry this fad, this

272

craze of yours, to the point of making a mockery of things which are sacred, you go too far.”

“You can’t see—won’t see—that I had no intention of making a mockery of anything sacred! It’s just because I believe in its sacredness,

and count it so much more than a mere form, that I felt I hadn't a right to ignore the plea of even 'one of the least of these.' God forbid that I should pretend to believe in Hilda's belief if I did not—and, after all, I am not a hypocrite."

"I think it's fantastic of you to assume that she made any such plea."

"You were there. You saw her."

"What I saw might have meant almost anything. When she caught hold of your hand, she may quite as well have been signifying, in a monkey way, that she wanted food. A cat is often as expressive in its appeal when it sits watching a person beside the tea-table."

"She *was* asking me for food—food for the spirit; and I couldn't turn her away empty."

"Oh, you're absurd!" She moved in her chair impatiently. "Hopeless; sentimental; idiotic! ... Once and for all—are you going on in this way?"

"I am going on," he answered slowly, soberly, "in

273

the way that my conscience directs me. To do otherwise would be to be false to myself. You don't think I ought to do that, surely, Cornelia?"

"I think a great many things better left unsaid. But I think most of all that we have made a mistake."

"You mean by that, I suppose, that you want to break off our engagement?"

"I do—if you will persist in this imbecility. I've given you every chance, but you remain obstinate."

"I'm fighting for my principles, Cornelia," he cried desperately. "Can't you realize how much they mean to me? I can't violate them, even for your sake. If I did, what sort of man would I be?"

"I, too, have principles," she said in a hard voice. "But as I am only a woman, I suppose mine matter less. What have you done to mine but violate them? I don't think you can love me so very much after all. I don't think you know what love really is."

He looked at her sadly, and wistfully the words came to his lips: "I could not love thee, Dear, so much, loved I not honor more!"

"You needn't quote poetry to me! That's the last straw!" she exclaimed roughly. Her harshness was the greater because she was wounded. "And don't talk to me of honor—you who have dishonored God and

274

the church and your vows by doing this unspeakable thing! ... Yes; and me—you've dishonored me, too, by taking an animal out of the jungle, a hideous monkey, and making a companion of her, bestowing upon her human affection; daring to show her a devotion almost as great as that which you've shown me—or greater. People have laughed at you. And I suppose at me. It's an insult to me! It's loathesome! It's indecent! The whole thing is too disgusting—!"

"You're saying things that you will be sorry for later," he reminded her, his face chalky; "things that will hurt you more than they will me."

"Oh, don't pose as a saint to *me!*" Her unhappiness was making her reckless. "I don't fancy your patronage and your superior attitudes. And I don't care what I say!"

"... Are you through?..." He stood like an image of stone by the door. But he had none of the blessed insentience of stone. It seemed to him that the cruel things she was saying were knives sticking into his heart.

"Yes, I am through—through with you," she cried wildly. "Thank God I found you out for the freak that you are in time!" With a hysterical laugh that was more of a sob, she twisted his ring from her

275

finger, threw it blindly in his direction, and rushed from the room.

He stood there for countless seconds, feeling stunned, unable to move. Then he went out after her to the porch, and to the gateway of the stockade. But when he searched there, she and her servant had both disappeared.

276

CHAPTER XXX.

BISHOP BRAITHWAITE ASSUMES CONTROL

THE Bishop of Uganda, having business which would shortly take him to Butiaba in any case, decided to kill three birds with one stone by making the trip at once and by taking a route which would carry him by Rambunda. Then he could pay his respects to the Anglican Bishop, a distinguished guest, and also investigate the charges which had reached his ears with regard to Dr. Hungerford.

His Lordship of Uganda had written Bishop Braithwaite a cordial note of welcome, expressing the hope that he would stay with them as long as he could, and inviting him to make himself quite at home in Rambunda—an invitation which Bishop Braithwaite scarcely needed. His disposition to make himself at home wherever he went was touching evidence of his belief in the Christian hospitality of all the world.

Bishop Braithwaite had offered to conduct the services for Hungerford on the coming Sunday, an offer which had all the imperative nature of a royal invitation. He had sincere consciousness of his going to bring a breath of the big world into a sordid group of natives. He thought his own teachings and point

277

of view in all respects would be superior to Hungerford's.

The news had gone forth and had soon spread far and wide among the natives that a Great Prophet of the White Man's church was to speak to them that day. Some of the more ignorant blacks from the remote settlements conceived the idea that it was the Great Jesus himself who was coming to bring the converts a reward. They remembered that the White Preacher had told them Jesus would come to earth some day. Probably He would have with Him much red cloth for them, plenty of beads with which to buy themselves wives, tobacco, and some good things to eat.

Before dawn the natives began to arrive in flocks from the surrounding country. They came by the hundreds—many who had never been to the

Mission before—out of awed curiosity to see the “Great White God.” Most of those at the Post had already seen the Bishop; but there were scores from farther away who had not.

Soon such a crowd had gathered that they could not begin to squeeze under the roof of the little mission shed. It was a motley group of all degrees of savagery. There were even cannibals, who still practiced their fiendish culinary arts when opportunity and concealment from the British Government permitted.

278

Nearly all were drawn by curiosity or hope of material gain.

The entire white population of the Post was present, with the exception of Lady Cornelia, who again pleaded indisposition and remained at home. When Bishop Braithwaite arrived with Captain Norton and his wife, the whole clearing was swarming with excited, perspiring Africans. With military assurance Captain Norton ordered the crowd back, and in awe the natives fell away, leaving a broad passageway down which the Bishop took the lead with all the satisfaction and impressiveness of a motion picture star visiting the theatre where adoring fans scramble to behold him in the flesh.

It was a triumph for his Lordship. He did not miss the nudgings and pointings on every hand, and the whispers about the Great White God. If he also heard, with Lady Evelyn, the comment of one small disappointed Uganda maiden, “Him not White God; him *Red* God,” he chose to ignore it, although his complexion, so remindful of the roast beef of old England, deepened still more to justify the little one’s innocent description.

A young chief, not long won over from cannibalism, was disrespectful to the Bishop’s corpulence, whispering to those near him: “Heap big in front ... must of eat big wife!” At this witticism there was much snickering appreciation behind shielding hands.

279

But this remark was made, fortunately, outside of the Bishop’s range of hearing, and turning to Hungerford he said, with an elation he could not conceal: “I am pleased to observe you were mistaken in estimating the number we might expect today. I believe you said there would be scarcely two hundred present, and—ah ...” He finished his sentence with a comprehensive wave of the hand.

Hungerford well knew why there was such a mob. He disliked offering advice to one of the Bishop's nature, especially in view of their present somewhat strained relations; but he felt bound to throw out a hint to one so unacquainted with the ways of these people.

"Yes, I did say that. But I had in mind then only the usual number; those who are to some extent responsive to our work here, and often not half of those are present. I should have anticipated this crowd of the merely curious and alms-seekers, and possible trouble makers. Even the regular congregation sometimes becomes unruly, and if I may suggest—"

"Thank you; but if I find myself in need of suggestions I'll let you know."

Hungerford stiffened. "I beg your pardon; I wished only to be of help to you."

Having returned to the missionary's house, and donned vestments elaborate enough for the burial

280

of the Pope, Bishop Braithwaite opened the service. Conscientiously he went through everything, from the beginning: "The Lord is in His Holy Temple; let all the earth keep silent before Him."

Save for subdued whisperings on the outskirts of the crowd, all went well enough until he came to the General Confession. When he began: "Almighty and most merciful Father; we have erred, and strayed from Thee like lost sheep," there was no response except from several whites present. The pious voice of Lady Evelyn on his right hand rose with striking distinctness amidst the mumbled repetition of the Englishmen and the noticeable silence of the blacks.

"We have offended ... !" The Bishop paused uneasily. "Why don't they follow me?" he asked in a low tone. "And why are they not kneeling?" Only a handful of the natives had knelt, and they were some of the converts who had done so for no better reason than that they had seen the whites kneel.

"They don't understand this," Hungerford explained. "They aren't trained to follow the ritual. I conduct the service very differently here, very simply."

"They should have been trained. That was your province. Why did you neglect it?"

281

“This is hardly the time or place for explanations. If you can’t see the impossibility of conducting formal services here.... I suggest that you omit the rest of this.”

The Bishop’s indignation increased. “Certainly not! If they can’t respond, let them keep silent. Our own people who are present will follow me.” And once more he lifted up his voice: “ ‘We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and—.....’!”

“What did you ought not done, White Preacher?” came a sudden interruption. It proceeded from one of the converts in a front row thirsting for information.

Bishop Braithwaite stopped aghast, and frowned forbiddingly over his glasses at the offender. Hungerford gave vent to a sudden choking sound which might have been a cough, but his hastily raised palm stifled it.

“You must not interrupt. You must not speak in the House of the Lord. It is—it is wrong,” said the Bishop.

“Why *you* speak, then?” the questioner wanted to know.

“I am the priest. I—it is right for me to speak.

282

I—.... He appealed to Hungerford. “You explain to them.... This is dreadful!”

Before the missionary could make any reply the inquiring one attempted justification. “Us always speaks in House of Lord. Us ask questions. If no ask, how us find out?”

This was logic, and Hungerford confirmed the statement with the further explanation: “I’ve found that they learn more from their spontaneous questions than in any other way. And besides, when their curiosity is aroused at any point it’s impossible to restrain them, as you can see. They’re worse than children in that respect.”

“There is a time for their questions, after the service,” argued the Bishop.

“You could no more induce these natives to wait, when an idea occurs to them, than you could persuade the wind to cease blowing. I regret it, but I am afraid you’ll have to go on for the present in the manner to which they’ve been accustomed. I admit it leaves much to be desired; but we can’t help ourselves.”

“If you had not brooked their audacities in the first place—....”

“If you still think that you—or anyone else—could have done better with this raw material, I’m willing

283

to discuss that point with you some other time; but not here, now. Once more I’m sorry to thrust my unwelcome advice upon you, but if you wish to save the situation at all this morning, you’d better let the service go, begin at once with your sermon, and suffer their interruptions and questions, as usual.”

His Lordship closed his book with what might have been described as a bang, hesitated for a moment, and advanced to the edge of the platform, where, after some preliminary throat clearing, he began:

“Dearly beloved....” Again Hungerford’s cough disturbed him—the Bishop would obviously have liked to call his congregation something quite different.

The lengthy interruption of the service and the low-voiced colloquy between the two ecclesiastics, of which the natives had no understanding, made them restless. Bishop Braithwaite had gone no further with his address than “We are gathered here today,” when one of the outside, who had been crowding his way to the mission shed, demanded in a high voice:

“Be you truly Great Jesus, like’m say?”

The Bishop’s mouth fell open and remained so, idiotically, for several seconds. The crowd of blacks waited breathlessly for his answer. But none came for half a minute; then one of the converts, bursting

284

with pride of knowledge, arose to impart the information. “No, him not Great Jesus. Him not like pictures. Great Jesus look pretty, and got kind, young face; not shiny head and big belly like him.”

Hungerford sought to silence the informant. But the other suggested: “Maybe him Great God then?”

Those in the front seats had begun to press around the Bishop and were laying investigating hands upon him. After examination of a decisive nature, one hideously ugly woman with a long peg run through her upper lip shouted the news; “Him no God, no spirit—him *man!*”

Others, eager to satisfy themselves on this point, were squeezing his Lordship’s arms, pinching him, tentatively punching his abdomen, as one tests the resistance of a punching bag, before Hungerford or any of the

other white men could interfere to any extent. All this had happened in a short time, though it seemed long to the alarmed and outraged Bishop, who was enduring a very fatiguing experience before this uncongenial and disagreeable crowd.

The missionary, having remembered a small vial of red ink in his pocket, hoped it might prove useful. Raising a commanding arm, he called loudly: "Get back to your seats and places, where you belong. The Bishop is the Lord's representative, and you must

285

show him proper respect. You must not lay your hands upon him, and you must not come any closer than this...." His commanding voice had arrested their attention and curiously held it when they saw him uncork the vial and begin to sprinkle its contents in a circle around Bishop Braithwaite and himself. "Pig blood!" Some one whispered. Then hurriedly they shrank back, stumbling over one another in their efforts to get clear of the magic circle.

Hungerford's quick wit had found this way out of the difficulty. He had even been prepared for it; for he had had to resort to such tricks, appealing to their superstitions, more than once in the past, finding that the natives could be controlled through their superstitions more readily than in any other way. And he knew that it was a custom of theirs to keep their sacred images and idols inviolate by surrounding them with a circle of blood, inside of which even the most irreverent profligate would never venture.

Then followed an interval of comparative silence, of which Hungerford advised the Bishop to take immediate advantage. Pulling himself together with a great effort, his Lordship again began to talk. But he had not been happy in his choice of a theme. He had already abandoned the idea of preaching a formal sermon, but he based his address upon the text: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over

286

one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."

For perhaps ten minutes he was allowed to proceed without interruption, chiefly because none of the Africans knew in the least what he was talking about, and stolidly sat in temporary subjection while he stood in the center of the red circle dogmatizing.

“, .. You are all God’s children. His love and mercy are infinite, even toward the greatest sinners among you. Christ is the Good Shepherd, who rejoiceth in every sheep which is brought into the fold. So says the Holy Word. ‘What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?’ You are His sheep who are still astray, and He wants to bring you home. Fie is calling to you, each and every one—you, the black sheep—...

He was getting along very well. But at this point a beaded and befeathered chieftain arose in all his majesty to protest emphatically against the metaphor.

“Us no sheep. You call my people sheep. Nobody call me sheep before. They call me ‘Sher,’ the Lion. Sometimes call me ‘Fighting Boar’ cause me heap brave, but never ‘sheep’!”

Hungerford ordered the man to sit down, and he

287

did so reluctantly, as the Bishop, casting his eyes heavenward in a mute entreaty for guidance, tried to make his meaning plain.

“I was not calling you a sheep. I used the term—ah—the word—as a—ah—symbol. That is, Christ called himself ‘the Good Shepherd,’ and all his people were his sheep, you know; and—ah—... In mercy’s name! Hungerford how do you talk to these creatures—how do you make them understand anything?” Bishop Braithwaite had at last come to an unwitting admission that he was not able to meet the difficulties of preaching to such a congregation, and was, after all, dependent upon someone who had learned how to handle them.

His explanations went for naught. Probably he was still not comprehended. In any case, the unfortunate term ‘sheep’ had not pleased them, and they grumblingly took up the chief’s grievance. Some declared with shameless candor: “You more like sheep than us. When you speak, you look like sheep what don’t know what he thinking about.” In truth his Lordship’s expression did somewhat resemble the vacuous solemnity of a perplexed sheep, as he stood there at a loss how to proceed.

Unwilling to accept defeat, he forced himself to address them once more. “You must not keep on interrupting me,” he admonished them with severity.

288

“If you would listen quietly to what I have to tell you, you would understand me better ...

“Don’t want to listen to you,” objected another bored and plain-spoken African. “You let our own Preacher-man talk to us. Him no fool.”

This was the final blow to the Bishop’s *amour propre*. He had been completely humiliated before Hungerford, his subordinate, before his niece and all the residents of the Post. At this crucial moment his attention was diverted from the last offender to the large, unlovely, mangy dog of one of the converts. Having forsaken the company of its equally mangy companions, which had gathered, as usual, on the outskirts of the mission shed to scratch fleas sociably in each other’s company during the service, it now strolled in, threading its way through the congested throng until it had arrived at the Bishop’s side, even within the hallowed circle. There it stood inquisitively and disrespectfully sniffing the pontifical boots.

“Him smell sheep,” whispered one of the black women.

When his Lordship looked down and saw the mongrel, a combination of displeasure, fear and lack of judgment culminated in the irresistible craving to

289

give expression to his inward emotions in some way, and he dismissed the attentions of the canine with a vicious kick which sent it yelping and sprawling across the platform.

The act incensed the dog’s owner, who, springing up, cried angrily: “You kick my dog, you no preach to *me*. I no want to hear your lies; my dog no want to hear your lies. Us home go. Never to your church come no more ... you *sheep!*”

As he pushed his way out his hot resentment seemed to spread through the entire crowd, which began openly to voice its dissatisfaction in a menacing fashion. As the nearer ones surged toward the Bishop, in a panic he threw out an arm to guard himself, and accidentally struck the first wife of a chief in the eye.

With a howl unbecoming a lady of her station she flew at him in a rage, scratching his face with the thoroughness of an enraged cat and spitting upon him with the affluency of a grasshopper. Colonel Trevor and some of the nearest white men tried to pull her off; the natives, particularly her sisters in matrimony, strove to incite her to further belligerence. For a few minutes it looked as if the services were going to end in universal warfare.

But Hungerford again came to the rescue. He sprang upon a chair, and waving both his hands to

290

attract attention shouted in stentorian tones:

“Stop! If you don’t listen to me, you will be punished. You are defying the British laws and threatening British subjects. If you do any harm to my people, the Governor will order you all shot!”

This bravado, notwithstanding its absurdity, had its effect. Every white man and woman there might have been massacred by the Africans before the black troops in the garrison at Rambunda could have been summoned. But as the natives had a healthy fear of the British Government, the threat told. Moreover, the crowd was more rebellious in the manner of insubordinate school children than aroused to bloodlust.

The roar gradually subsided to a murmur again, and the throng after some dissension among various groups, began sullenly to disperse.

Lady Evelyn was half swooning with fright. “This horrible, horrible country!” she moaned. “If we could only get out of it forever!”

As soon as they were able to elbow their way through the dwindling crowd, Hungerford unceremoniously bundled her, with Mrs. Hoskins and the Bishop, into his house. Even now his Lordship was not disposed to accept the blame for his fiasco.

“I hope,” he said explosively to Hungerford, “that this atrocious treatment of me has convinced you of the madness of allowing these heathen such liberties

291

as you have, of the crime of neglecting to impress upon them in the beginning a proper respect for the Church’s authority.”

Hungerford did not even stop to reply. It was natural, he supposed, that the egotistical man should thus try to save his face before the others, and it was not a time for parleying. Telling Rimpano to get some refreshments, he left them, shutting the stockade gate behind him. Then he returned to the officers, who, with a display of assurance which they really did not feel, stood over the crowd, ordering those who still lingered to leave at once.

Not until the last native had departed did the white men join the women and the Bishop in the stockade. Even the Colonel was a trifle pale and very

thankful for the lucky outcome of the grave situation. It had been what Telford feelingly called “a deuced narrow squeak.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

HUNGERFORD'S HAND IS FORCED

Part I

IN THE dim glow of unshaded candlelight her sister's drawing-room seemed to Lady Cornelia to have achieved an almost ecclesiastic effect; due supposedly, she decided whimsically, to the presence of two bishops in the house. For the Bishop of Uganda, as well as her uncle, was now their guest, there being no hostelry of any description in Rambunda.

He had arrived late in the afternoon, and, after exchanging felicitations with the Bishop of Winfield, had explained that he must be on his way to Butiaba early on the morrow. Therefore, though regretting the necessity of combining business with pleasure, he must see his errant missionary that evening.

"I thought we'd have the coffee in here; it's so much cozier," said Evelyn, idly sorting the scattered music on the piano. I suppose the men will be in presently—if they don't hold their trial in the dining room."

"They can't very well without the prisoner," Lady Cornelia was replying when the Reverend Chester

293

Hungerford was ushered in. She was near a doorway on the opposite side of the room, and taking advantage of the fact, quickly left the drawing-room by that exit as he entered. She felt rather childish and silly in the act; yet she could not stay to face him, after her tempestuous parting from him the other day.

Evelyn, however, welcomed him like the perfect hostess she was. "Rimpano brought me your note, Chester, explaining that your pressing duties prevented your coming to dinner. District visiting, I suppose! Of course, nobody was in the least deceived by your excuse. Why are you acting like this?"

"I suppose it's useless to pretend to *you*, Evelyn," he confessed. "But you must realize that I couldn't dine here, with your uncle having declared

open war upon me, and ...”he made an illuminating gesture toward the door by which Lady Cornelia had left, “... others not scrupling to give me the cut direct. It wouldn’t have been very pleasant for anyone. In fact, I shouldn’t have come at all if I hadn’t had what amounts to a definite order from my Lord—and Master!—the Bishop of Uganda.”

“I don’t know why everyone has had to be so horrid and stupid,” she pouted. “And that includes you, too. You really have behaved unpardonably over this disgraceful monkey business of yours! I’m not trying

294

to make a joke of it at all! I tell you frankly how much I disapprove, but still I hope we can be friends. It would be like cutting off a brother to lose you. And after Uncle Gregory and Cornelia have gone, you must come to see us often. It will be terribly lonely.”

He attempted to steady his voice and ask quite casually, “She is going to leave you, then?”

“Yes, she’s going back with Uncle. They start for Mombasa in a few days.... Oh, Chester, Cornelia has told me that she’s broken with you, and I’m so sorry!”

Gratefully he pressed the hand she had impulsively extended in sympathy; but he was unable to reply with more than a husky, “Never mind.”

“I think they’re going to court-martial you, Chester.” She tried to relieve the tenseness of the moment by jesting.

Before he could answer the men entered the drawing-room. The Bishop of Uganda received him courteously, if without warmth, and Bishop Braithwaite succeeded in concealing his feelings sufficiently to observe the ordinary parlor courtesies. Captain Norton’s cordial greeting was, by contrast, so marked as to amount almost to an expression of his inclination to side with Hungerford. This feeling was prompted

295

not by concurrence with the missionary’s views, but by his natural British tendency to defend the “under dog,” as he had come to think of Hungerford in the present state of affairs.

“Perhaps I should apologize for having asked you to see me here,” said the Bishop of Uganda, “but the extreme shortness of my stay prevented my going out to the Mission, and I knew of no other time or place in which we

could have a meeting. If our gracious hostess will pardon the liberty, we can discuss informally here this evening the matters to which I alluded in my letter.”

“Of course, we want you to make yourself perfectly at home here. I’m going to see if I can do anything for my sister,” returned the hostess tactfully. “She—has a headache.... They’ll bring you coffee presently.” With a hospitable little nod, which made a point of including Hungerford, she left the room.

After putting the cigars and cigarettes at his guests’ disposal, Captain Norton prepared to excuse himself, but Bishop Braithwaite laid a detaining hand upon his arm. “No, no, Arthur; we want you to remain,” he continued. “You have a right to be present at this unpleasant business.”

“I trust it will not be unpleasant,” ventured the Captain, seating himself uncomfortably.

296

“It can scarcely be *pleasant*,” the Bishop of Winfield breathed heavily. “However, I, too, trust that we shall find it no more disagreeable than it must, in the nature of things, prove to be. It all depends upon the spirit in which Dr. Hungerford has come here this evening.”

“I have not come repenting in sackcloth and ashes, if that is what you’re hoping,” Hungerford answered with grim calmness, “for I feel that I’ve done nothing in this matter that calls for repentance.”

The Bishop of Uganda frowned at this unpropitious beginning, and suggested: “Suppose you let us be the judges of that, after having heard your explanations, Dr. Hungerford.”

Hungerford frowned formally. “I am at your service now, my Lord.”

The Bishop of Winfield looked at the Bishop of Uganda with an “I-told-you-so” air. “You see,” he said, “he is not prepared to listen to reason. I have endeavored repeatedly, for the sake of my long friendship with his father, to bring him to reason, but it apparently can’t be done. I had all these troubles in England, when he was in my own See.” He had a way of speaking of Hungerford and at the same time ignoring him, as if the missionary had been a refractory

297

child. “You will soon discover, if you question him, that his heterodoxy has gone beyond all bounds.”

“ ‘Heterodoxy’ is perhaps rather a strong word,” observed the Bishop of Uganda.

“I assure you, it is no exaggeration,” protested the Bishop of Winfield.

“Possibly you, too, have been hearing some of the mad tales which I find are being circulated,” continued the other. “It might be as well for me to tell you something that I had not intended to mention. Just before leaving Entebbe, and since writing to both of you, I received a letter from—I prefer not to say whom—but from an officer here in Rambunda, accusing Dr. Hungerford of having—well ... of having done such an insane thing that I hardly like to repeat it here—even as an example of to what lengths idle gossip can go. But ... it was this—that Dr. Hungerford had admitted a female ape into the Mission, and yes, actually baptized her into the church!” He finished with an apologetic laugh for having even repeated so wild a story.

Bishop Braithwaite greeted this revelation with an explosion which might have been mirthful appreciation, or merely the effect of shock upon a somewhat apoplectic constitution. Captain Norton, who had been smoking in silence, with longing glances toward

298

the door, now wriggled in his chair and looked more uncomfortable than ever. Of the four, Hungerford seemed most at ease, although his face was as expressionless as a mask. He made a little unconscious movement, as if bracing himself for battle.

“I had no intention of trying to conceal anything from you, my Lord,” he declared. “Nor from Bishop Braithwaite; I supposed you both knew of it by this time; and had circumstances been different—had I not known that you were coming here so soon—I should, in any case, have written you about it. What you have told is so; and I’m ready to stand by my act, and its consequences. However, I did not baptize the ape. Rimpano performed that act.”

Had a bomb been thrown into their midst, it could have produced no more startling effect upon two of the quartette than did Hungerford’s admission.

When Bishop Braithwaite had in a measure regained his breath, he graspingly demanded of Captain Norton, who had doggedly continued smoking: “*Well*, Arthur! Do you not agree with me that the only proper course of action to take with Hungerford is to—to—have his brain

examined by a specialist? ... Why! it is ... Why! I have—I have no words ...”

“Well, of course, it does strike you as beastly, on the surface, when you first hear of it,” admitted his

299

nephew by marriage. “But you—you rather get used to the idea when you’ve known Hilda, and—all that.” He resorted to the Bishop’s own pet phrase. Eloquence was not Captain Norton’s strong point. “You see, I’ve known about it long enough to get over the ... the novelty of the idea,” he added by way of self-defense.

“Novelty!” burst from the choking Bishop of Winfield. “That doesn’t begin to describe it! I—I ... I have no words,” he ended again, despairingly. But presently he asked forbiddingly: “You say you knew of this before, Arthur? You *knew*, and didn’t tell me? Did Evelyn and Cornelia know also?”

“Yes,” the Captain still dogged. “It was no business of ours, after all, you know.”

The Bishop of Uganda was also for a few moments shocked beyond words. But at last he recovered himself and turning to Hungerford, in something of the manner of one humoring a lunatic, the violence of whose next outbreak can no longer be gauged, invited the missionary to go ahead and say whatever he wished. He should have every chance to extenuate his actions, if any extenuation of such an enormity were possible.

The ensuing controversy proved a lengthy one.

300

Part II

Evelyn had found, on going to seek her sister, that Lady Cornelia had retired to her room for the evening, to avoid embarrassing encounters, and had made herself comfortable with a negligee and a book. When the hostess returned to the drawing-room more than an hour later, she found that the men were still in deep discussion; and, after hesitating unnoticed on the threshold, she turned and went away again, leaving them to carry the matter to a conclusion without interruption.

She had heard her Uncle saying to Hungerford: “After all of your nonsensical arguments have been advanced, the fact remains that the

church is, as it were, a school for the guidance and development of souls. Then it's obvious that you cannot admit to it a creature which hasn't a soul."

" 'A school for the development of souls'," echoed Hungerford. "Exactly! Then it's obvious that any creature trying to develop its soul has a right to such help as the church can give it. And I don't at all admit that animals haven't souls. On the contrary, there seems to be a wealth of evidence pointing to the presumption that they have."

"But that is truly heterodoxy," murmured the Bishop of Uganda. "It would interest me to hear

301

some of that evidence which maintains that animals have souls."

"Having accepted, upon reasonable grounds as well as upon faith, the hypothesis that human beings have souls, are immortal—which itself has never been actually proven—I have not been able to find a single argument in favor of our own immortality that doesn't imply the immortality of all animal life as well; nor a single argument against their immortality which, if admitted, would not be equally conclusive against our own."

"That is no argument," snorted Bishop Braithwaite. "You might as well argue that because your investments fail and you lose a fortune I, too, must lose mine."

"Let us hear Dr. Hungerford out," suggested the Bishop of Uganda.

"It seems to me that by analogy we have every reason to believe animals are immortal if humans are," the missionary contended. "Is not a beast produced by the same rule and the same order of generation as among ourselves? Is not its body nourished by the same foods, hurt by the same injuries; its mind actuated by the same passions and affections as ours? Does it not also mingle its dust with ours, and in like manner surrender up the vital spark? Why is

302

this spark—or soul—to perish, then, just because it chances to belong to an *animal*?"

"Your eloquence reminds me of nothing so much as Shylock's defense of the Jews," said Bishop Braithwaite contemptuously. "If you have nothing more important to say than all this balderdash I see little use in our prolonging this discussion."

The Bishop of Uganda made a deprecatory gesture in the Bishop of Winfield's direction. But there was some impatience in his reply to Hungerford. "Surely you were not referring to these mere deductions when you recently spoke of 'a wealth of evidence.' Where do you find this evidence?"

"Chiefly in the Scriptures," returned Hungerford defiantly.

"If you can quote scripture with which I am unfamiliar, you will do me a favor, I assure you," interposed Bishop Braithwaite with further contempt.

"Not any with which you are unfamiliar, probably, but some which you may choose to ignore."

"Let us say, rather, some which we may interpret differently, Dr. Hungerford," the Bishop of Uganda rebuked him. "Please go on."

"Obscure, baffling and contradictory as much of

303

the Bible is, there are some passages which, if one sees fit to believe them at all, bear only one obvious interpretation," Hungerford replied. "And such, I think, is that in which God spoke unto Noah, and to his sons with him saying, 'And behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth ... the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; . . I'm sure I don't need to quote it further; you doubtless know it by heart, and will recall that the Lord's promise is repeated three or four times in one chapter, to the point of monotony, but certainly of emphasis which there is no possible danger of missing; and in each instance 'every living creature of all flesh,' is explicitly mentioned with man."

"But what was that covenant? Simply that 'the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh'," was the Bishop of Uganda's reminder. "That was all. There is no mention of immortality there."

"But the fact that the Lord expressly included all animal life with the life of mankind in this connection reasons that He regarded it as being no less important in its own way than our own. Indeed, He

304

says as much in more than one place, 'I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the fields are mine.' No fewer than thirty-three times are man and beast placed in the same class in the Bible, as of course, you know. There are many passages in both the Old and New Testaments which definitely relate to the future life of animals; but what is more conclusive than the simple statement in the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, 'For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts'."

"It is you who are ignoring now that part which does not fit our argument," was the answer he received. "Remember that this alludes only to death, 'all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.' 'As one dieth, so dieth the other.' That we very well know. But it says nothing about what happens to the animal *after* it has died."

"Does it not? It declares also, 'Man hath no preeminence above beast' and 'All go unto one place.' Nothing could be much plainer than that. Or if you deny that the *animal* is resurrected after it 'turns to dust again,' what reason have you to claim that *man* is an exception to the general law unequivocally stated here? To say that is simply to make an arbitrary rule to suit yourself, in contradiction to the significance of the rest of the passage.... Then how

305

about the statement in Revelation that there were animals in Heaven before the throne of God?"

"The mention there is of only four beasts."

"I'm not so sure of that. Consider verses eleven to thirteen of the fifth chapter. Though, granting that you're right in that particular, if there were four beasts, there is certainly no reason why there should not have been four thousand—or four million. The same passages refer to only four and twenty elders; do you take it, then, that there were but twenty-four men in Heaven?"

"Your argument is trivial. I consider that entire chapter as a symbol; not to be taken literally at all."

"You will pardon me if I say, my Lord, that I don't see why you should accept one statement literally and another symbolically, merely according to the dictates of your fancy. However, if St. John's Revelation seems unconvincing to you, perhaps you'll accept Job's declaration that in the Lord's hand 'is the soul of every living thing.' There you have it in a manner so simple and unadorned that it would seem to admit of no

evasions or perversions. If you accept the Bible as truth ‘every living thing has a soul!’ so it tells us. And personally, I believe emphatically the promise in the third chapter of Ecclesiastes: ‘Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. Nothing

306

can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.’ Does not that certify to any reasoning person that if God has created life, ‘it shall be forever?’ And that is true of *all* life, if nothing can be taken from it.... I might continue my citations indefinitely, but at the risk of wearying you. As I’ve said, the evidence all points to the conclusion that what applies to man’s future estate applies likewise to that of animals. There is no reasonable way of getting around it. And, indeed, why are you so anxious to deny it? How can it hurt you to believe that they may also enjoy a life hereafter? Why assume a ‘dog in the manger’ attitude in regard to Heaven?”

“You are insolent, Dr. Hungerford! It would assuredly not matter to me if you were correct in your theories; but it seems entirely unreasonable from my point of view. It is an idea which has never been established; one which the church has never predicated, and—”

“Ah, there you have it! Tradition again! The church has never done thus and so! For that reason must it go on blindly doing the same things—whether stupid or not—until the end of time? Suppose the exponents of medicine, of law, of art, of all branches of science, had assumed such an attitude; where would the world be today? Great Heaven! it is hard to be patient in the face of such arguments! ...

307

Moreover, the idea is *not* a new one,” he rushed on excitedly, before his listeners could interrupt; “it is ages old. I know of no other religion which seeks to doom animals to annihilation after death. The teachings of Buddha and other prophets, which were followed by millions for generations before Christianity was even known, have urged the sanctity of animal life as well as that of humans. John Wesley believed in the immortality of the animals. But I don’t need to tell you all these things, for every theological student knows it.”

“No, you do not need to,” stormed the Bishop of Winfield. “Nor do you need to bring heathen religions into the argument at all. They are irrelevant, and of no value to a Christian. And you, who are so fond of Scriptural

quotations, may take unto yourself the words: ‘Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and the profane, neither have they showed difference between the clean and the unclean’!”

“There is more of it,” Hungerford replied steadily; “ ‘There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof ... to shed blood, and destroy souls, to get dishonest gain ... seeking vanity, and divine lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken ...’ You aren’t interested in a

308

simple, living, helping religion, the Christianity of Christ—but only in a mass of musty forms and doctrines. You say to me, ‘Have you a precedent? Can your beliefs be brought within the four corners of a certain formula, drawn from past centuries?’ If not, you won’t have it—you don’t want it. It matters not if it be logic, if it be Christian gospel of ‘Do unto others as you would be done by.’ Do you realize what is the matter with Christianity today—why it is a failure in the eyes of the multitude? It is simply because you have left no room for God and Christ in your man-made, ritual-crowded church.”

“It is your church, too,” the Bishop of Uganda reminded him.

“It can be no longer his church,” said the Bishop of Winfield. “He has reviled it. He will be unfrocked for this.”

“You are right,” Hungerford agreed unflinchingly, “it is no longer my church. I am ready to resign. I’ve felt that it was coming to this for some time; and now I know that I can’t remain in the church of England and feel that I am doing my duty. I’ve come to the parting of the ways.”

“Don’t speak rashly in the heat of the moment,” advised the Bishop of Uganda. “Perhaps we can yet adjust all this.”

309

“There is no way to adjust it, my Lord. For I can’t change my views, and the church won’t change its precepts. I’m not speaking rashly, I assure you. I’ve simply arrived at a full realization of the fact that the church is no longer the place for me. For a long time I’ve tried to adjust my beliefs to its teachings, but as I see now that I never can, I should only become an arch hypocrite if I remained in orders and continued teaching and preaching doctrines which I don’t believe.... You have been very lenient with me,

according to your lights, and courteous. I should like you to believe that I'm appreciative." He carefully addressed his remarks to the Bishop of Uganda. Bishop Braithwaite now sat in silence.

"And if you leave the church, what do you expect to do, if I may ask?"

"I haven't the remotest idea—yet," Hungerford confessed frankly. "I can see only one step ahead at present. But that one is inevitable now."

"With all your wild notions," lamented Bishop Braithwaite, "I had never thought that you would come to this—an apostate and a self-confessed unbeliever. It is a blow to me—even now."

"I beg your pardon; I haven't confessed to being anything of the sort. I am as much a Christian as ever—more than ever, as I see it—and in every sense

310

'a believer.' I believe so strongly that my convictions carry me beyond what the church is willing to believe, accept, acknowledge. I believe that God is at once too great and too simple—too universal—to be cramped into the close confines of your limited creed. So I am going out where I can find Him—unfettered."

"I see it is useless to talk to you after you have gone so far," sighed the Bishop of Winfield.

"I have gone so far." Cryptically Hungerford agreed with him.... "This interview hasn't been particularly agreeable for any of us, and it's quite late; so we needn't prolong it, need we? Norton, if you'll make my adieu to Evelyn, I'll say good-night."

Captain Norton arose and dropped the end of his last cigarette into the ash tray. He had remained silent for the past hour, stolidly smoking, being present against his will and averse to contributing to a discussion which led into waters that he felt to be beyond his depth.

"I'll see you out," he said briefly. And putting an arm across Hungerford's shoulder in half defiant evidence of abiding friendship and support—a rarely demonstrative act for him—he walked with Hungerford from the room.

After he had left the house, Hungerford's momentary

311

exaltation left him, and the reaction was a distinct depression. He did not in the least regret his decision, but he had temporarily an almost paralyzing

sensation of having finally burned his last bridge behind him.

He had not sufficient private means to live in idleness, had he been willing to do so, and he did not yet know what he could do, or even what he wanted to do. He was now adrift, cut entirely from the only life he had known for so many years, and he felt an acute sense of something missing, as much as if an arm had been cut off.

He had also lost Lady Cornelia. The other was not so hard to bear as the knowledge that *she* had turned against him. There remained nothing of the old order of things for him to hold to. Even Hilda was gone; and no longer would he have the scientific interest in the apes. He had to build his life anew from the very foundation. That was going to be very difficult, no matter how firm might be his conviction that he had done the right thing.

Part III

The two bishops lingered in the drawing-room for some time after Hungerford had gone, still discussing the question he had raised.

“I could not have believed that he would go to

312

such lengths,” said the Bishop of Winfield. “He has made a grievous mistake—in everything; a terrible mistake.”

“Who knows?” said the Bishop of Uganda.

313

CHAPTER
XXXII.

BISHOP BRAITHWAITE GOES
HUNTING

Part I

“ ‘Less than the dust beneath
thy chariot wheel,
Less than the rust that never
stained thy sword ...’ ”

LADY Cornelia’s deep, rich contralto voice died away in the midst of the song, her hands fell idly on the keys, and she sat staring ahead of her out of the window to where the border of the jungle was visible beyond the Post limits.

“Why are you stopping?” her sister asked, looking up from the novel she had been lazily reading.... “What’s the matter, Cornelia? You look as if you had lost your last friend?”

“I have,” was the dejected reply. “The best and truest friend I ever had. And it’s all my own fault.”

“I’m surprised—it isn’t like you to descend into

314

such an abyss of humility.” Lady Evelyn prepared to resume her book. “I don’t think you can be very well.... You’d better let all that remorse and introspection alone, and go on with your song.”

“I can’t.” Impatiently Lady Cornelia left the grand piano to drift restlessly about the room. “It’s too true. It described too accurately my own sensations when I’m singing it; less than the very worm that crawls in the dust I feel when I think of the way I’ve treated Chester.”

“Well, if you’ve come to that conclusion, why on earth don’t you tell him so?”

“Impossible—you know I can’t, Evelyn; I’ve some pride left. After behaving like a shrew and a fishwife and flouncing out of his house forever

that day—go back to him and eat humble pie? Never! ... He'd only scorn me if I did."

"Well, if you aren't going to make it up with him, drop it, forget and be done with it. Don't moon around here, looking like Isolde, or some other heroine of tragic opera."

"You're very unkind, Evelyn." Lady Cornelia's voice sounded stifled. She was standing by the window now, persistently staring out, perhaps to conceal her face from her sister.

"My dear Cornelia, I'm not; at least I certainly

315

don't mean to be. But what do you want me to say? If you don't intend to patch it up, put him out of your mind and go serenely on your way. That's the only sporting thing to do."

"It's more easily said than done.... And I have held my head up before all of them, and let not a soul suspect what I've been feeling—not even Uncle and Arthur. You're the only living being I've opened my heart to. Must I wear the mask with you, too? You might allow me one little moment of weakness and humanness. I'm so unhappy Evelyn."

Evelyn now realized how grieved her sister was, and went to her with a perplexed little pucker between her white brows. "I've never known you like this before, Cornelia," she declared, putting an arm around her. "I am sympathetic, and I'd do anything in my power for you, darling. But I—I can't realize fully that this is my self-possessed, care-free, independent, big sister who has always snapped her fingers at the whole world."

"I'm only a woman, after all," Lady Cornelia admitted with a catch in her voice.

Evelyn soothed her with caressing little feminine gestures. "You'll forget about it when you get back to England again," she said consolingly. "Only think—tomorrow you start for Mombasa; and then I'll be

316

the one who'll have cause to cry and need consolation. Oh, if I were going home with you, Cornelia, I don't believe anything could make me unhappy for long!"

"But you'll soon be leaving here too." Lady Cornelia raised her head from her sister's shoulder, and, recovering from her moment of weakness, wiped her eyes on a bit of lace which did duty as a handkerchief. It was her

turn to be the comforter now as she reminded the homesick Evelyn: "Are you forgetting that Arthur's leave has been granted, and it won't be more than a couple of months at most before you'll be starting for Mombasa yourself?"

"But it's only a short time we'll get to stay at home, and then we'll be packed off somewhere else," Evelyn answered gloomily.

"Oh, but you're crossing your bridges ahead of time; with both the families doing their best to get Arthur stationed permanently in England. Uncle believes the chances are good of putting it through."

"I daren't even dream of that! It would be Heaven!"

"I've an idea they'll manage it.... But for my part, Evelyn, if I had the man I love for my own, I'd be contented, if necessary, to spend the rest of my days on a barren island."

Finding that the conversation was veering around

317

again toward the danger zone, Evelyn was relieved by the interruption of a servant announcing that luncheon was ready.

"Goodness! Is it that late? I'd no idea.... Come on, Cornelia, we've got *tomatoes a la Ritz* for luncheon. That'll cheer us up and make us think we're back in London."

"You aren't going to wait for the men?"

"No. They won't be home until night, either of them. Arthur's off hiking those dull-witted toy soldiers all this sweltering day, poor angel! And Uncle, you know, went early this morning with Mr. Telford for another day's shooting. As they didn't get anything worth mentioning yesterday, he was bound he'd put in his last day here trying to bring down *something*. He feels it'll be a disgrace if he has to return home from Africa with the admission he didn't bag so much as a leopard."

"If Chester knew what they were doing ..."

"Chester doesn't own the country, or make the game laws.... Don't be silly, Cornelia. You know he has made himself a general pest with his antipathy to hunting ever since we've been here."

"He has done nothing of the sort," retorted Lady Cornelia almost sharply. "He has merely done his best to live up to his code of right and wrong, which

318

is certainly praiseworthy of him—and more than most people do!”

“Well, he can’t expect everyone to see things from his point of view, you know,” objected Lady Evelyn, defending their Uncle and others. “*My* code is ‘live and let live’.....” Then suddenly becoming aware that, in view of the subject, she was professing a rather paradoxical code, which moved Lady Cornelia to a scoffing laugh, she abruptly chose another topic as they seated themselves at the luncheon table: “I am dying of this terrible heat, Cornelia!”

Part II

Far out in the forest the heat was even greater; and Telford looked at Bishop Braithwaite with mute astonishment. His Lord’s face was nearly the color of a boiled beet. He was puffing painfully with the unaccustomed exertion of walking, and mopping his streaming forehead continually.

“I say, hadn’t we better turn back?” suggested the young Lieutenant. “This climate does get you when you aren’t used to it, and you look pretty well fagged. I don’t want you to get sunstroke or anything, you know.”

“I shall be all right,” panted the Bishop. “And I’m not going home without a skin or something that I’ve shot, if I have to stay all night. Here it is after three

319

o’clock, and we’ve got nothing but a few birds. Why, I fancied that we shouldn’t have to go two miles to find anything from a giraffe to a lion.”

“That’s the amateur’s idea of Africa.... Beg your pardon, my Lord, but of course you couldn’t be expected to have anything more than an amateur’s knowledge of the country, as short a time as you’ve been here. As a matter of fact, there are doubtless plenty of animals around us right now; only most of them lie down in the daytime, unless they get desperately hungry. It takes a trained hunter to find big game anywhere near a settlement these days. If it weren’t so, it would be even more dangerous living in these parts than it is. As for lions, there are natives who’ve lived here all their lives and never even seen one.”

They plodded on, with frequent pauses for rest, the two native gun-bearers grinning good-naturedly at the white man’s lack of endurance.

“It seems to be getting hotter and hotter,” puffed the Bishop. The sun did not strike through the thick verdure overhead to any extent; but when they

came to the clearings and stretches of veldt covered with coarse grass, it beat down upon them like something tangible, penetrating their pith helmets as though bent upon cooking their very brains. Even in the forest the heat was clammily, suffocatingly oppressive,

320

as if a moist blanket had been thrown over them, head and all, while insects buzzed around their ears in maddening swarms.

At length they entered a dense grove, in which the light was deep and soft, as if it shone through heavy green glass. The atmosphere here was almost cool in contrast to the sweltering heat they had just left.

"Suppose we stop and rest just a moment," suggested the Bishop for perhaps the fiftieth time that day.

He was about to sink down upon a bed of soft moss when he became aware of a movement among the trees. He looked again. Though he could not see the animal distinctly amidst the sheltering foliage, a patch of white fur was plainly visible. Taking hasty aim, he fired at the patch; and he knew by the sharp cry of pain which followed the report of his gun, that the shot had wounded his quarry. As it emerged from the thicket he saw that it was a white ape. Walking upright like a human, it took a few halting steps forward, its hands tightly pressed over the wound in the breast. Then it fell prone within a couple of yards of where they were standing.

Telford rushed forward with staring eyes, and his sudden fear was confirmed. Bending over the quivering

321

body he cried: "My God!—it's Hilda! You've killed Hilda!"

"Well, well ... how was I to know?" murmured the Bishop, exculpating himself.

"Of course, you couldn't help it," Telford assented. "Hungerford would say it wouldn't have happened if we hadn't gone hunting. But then, he's a bit of a crank on that point. Anyway—it's dreadfully bad luck."

"Oh, well, it's only a monkey, after all.... And he needn't know anything about it," decided the Bishop on second thought.

The gun-bearers were more concerned than Telford. Both were members of the Mission, and according to their simple nature, having accepted Hungerford's faith, they had also accepted the man. What he did was always right in their eyes, and they had come to think of Hilda as one of

their fellows after her baptism in the church. They were kneeling over the prostrate form of the white ape, whose eyes were already glazing. As her muscles relaxed and her hands fell away from her breast, the fatal wound was revealed.... She gave a strangled cough, and a spurt of blood gushed from the bullet hole, staining the white hair around it. The two white men standing there, helplessly staring down at the awful sight, now

322

noticed for the first time a small gold cross suspended by a fine chain around her neck. Weakly one of the hands moved toward it, and her groping fingers closed around the cross. Clutching it tightly, she raised her stiffening arm in a spasmodic, uncompleted gesture, and then, with a long-drawn sigh, lay still.

323

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LADY CORNELIA HAS MORE TO SAY

Part I

WHERE did it get that cross?" inquired the Bishop.
Telford shrugged his shoulders. "Dashed if I know! From Hungerford, probably. It's a rum go, isn't it? ... The whole business."

The gun-bearers were carefully lifting the body when the Bishop interposed with the order to leave it where it lay. He made up his mind that, hard as it was to lose the one respectable kill of the day's hunt, he could not keep this skin without facing all sorts of further unpleasantness. To leave it here would be the simplest ending of the disagreeable adventure. But as he explained that he did not want the skin, one of the natives indignantly replied:

"Us no save Hilda for you. Take her home to Preacher Hung'ford. Him bury her."

"No, no, you can't do that," said the Bishop, hastily. "Leave it here."

Stubbornly the natives ignored his command.

324

"I tell you to drop the body of that animal, and leave it here," stormed Bishop Braithwaite.

"Heap us will not!" shouted one of the blacks; and they refused emphatically. Their respect and opinion of the Bishop had been nil ever since the Sunday of his disastrous service at the Mission. And in their absurd, fragmentary English, they did not hesitate to let him know how little they regarded his orders.

"You can't do anything with them," Telford told him resignedly. "You'd just as well let them have their own way about it. They're going to take it, anyway."

"Are they?" his Lordship muttered. He had never before known what it was to have a servant question his orders, and he was in a passion. The affair was getting violently upon his nerves. It had been, altogether, an

abominable day. All the profanity which his lips dared not utter coursed through his mind, affording him, however, but slight relief.

Part II

Hungerford's grief was great. He prepared to bury Hilda in the clearing by the spring, where she had first come to him.

Helped by some of the native converts to whom

325

the gun-bearers had told the news as soon as they had reached the settlement, Rimpano made a coffin out of one of Hungerford's old steamer trunks. They lined it with white orchids, placing a great cluster of the regal flowers over the ugly wound in her breast. Her fingers still grasped the cross, and they had to force to her side the extended arm, which death's rigor held in the position it had last assumed in ebbing life, reaching gropingly upward.

Telford had accompanied the two natives to the Mission with the body, and when they were covering the coffin, he asked: "Did you give her that cross?"

"No," Hungerford answered. "I missed it soon after she left me the last time. I wondered what had become of it. I suppose ..."

"She steal it when you no see," Rimpano volunteered. "She go get something out of your box in morning before she go way. Me see her, but no see what it is. Must of been cross."

"I'd willingly have given it to her," said Hungerford sadly.

As they made ready to lower her into her grave, Hungerford found himself mentally going over the order for the burial of the dead. He had finished with all forms of the church, but he had to remind himself

326

forcibly of the fact now. Habit binds with even stronger chains than reason, and the words were repeating themselves in his thoughts; " 'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die'."

He raised his eyes and looked up through the trees to the visible bit of sky, now paling in the dusk of evening.

“Hilda did believe; didn’t she Lord?” he asked with the confiding appeal of a child.

Then he turned to find Bishop Braithwaite and Lady Cornelia hastening toward the little group.

“I came here,” the Bishop began, a little breathless and flustered, “at my niece’s earnest request, to express my regret for the unfortunate occurrence today. I did not want to leave on the morrow feeling you bore me additional ill-will for what was, I assure you, entirely an accident.”

Hungerford scarcely heard him. “There is nothing that you can do here,” he said dully.

“Do you accept my apology?” queried the Bishop. “I have humbled myself to come to you in a spirit of Christian forbearance and—sympathy; but your attitude leads me to fear ...”

327

“ ‘Fear not them which kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul’,” muttered Hungerford, looking up at the Bishop with unseeing eyes.

“The man is insane,” declared his Lordship. “A victim of monomania. I am sorry that you persuaded me to come, Cornelia; I have humiliated myself, by your wish, and have only been insulted for my pains. Let us go.”

Lady Cornelia laid her hand upon her uncle’s arm. “Wait!” she whispered.

* * * *

Once again the jungle opened. Out of the dusk emerged a number of great black apes—Hilda’s people—walking in stricken silence. When she had not come home they went forth to find her. And that sixth sense of theirs, which some call instinct, had led them to the right spot.

As Rimpano explained to Hungerford, it was the law of the tribe that all the rulers should be buried together by their own people. He realized that he had no right to keep her from them. Silently he yielded to their claim; and presently the little group moved away in the darkness, bearing Hilda’s flower-decked body. The silence was broken by the hoot of a lone owl in the forest. Night and the jungle closed around them.

328

She that had been Hilda, the white ape, was in the keeping of the One who alone, in His good time, can reveal the mystery of souls.

Brushing his hand across his eyes as if to dispel some bewildering vision, Hungerford perceived Lady Cornelia standing close beside him.

"You are still here?" he asked stupidly. "I thought you had gone."

"I had something that I wanted to say," she replied hesitatingly.

Then he saw the Bishop standing apart from them, tapping an impatient foot and self-consciously ignoring the stares of the departing natives.

"What can you have to say to me now? ... Why did you come anyway?" He did not intend to be rude; he was really curious in a listless way, though the words sounded indifferent.

"I came to tell you how very sorry I am," she said gently. "Art saw the gun-bearers carrying Hilda to the Post and so we found out what had happened."

"Are you really sorry?" Hungerford questioned doubtfully. "Sorry for *me*—or what?"

"For everything.... For being too hasty with you, and for the brutal way I treated you. That doesn't do much good, does it?" She smiled sadly. "But I

329

want you to know, at least, that I *am* sorry.... I've heard all about your leaving the church. What do you expect to do now?"

"I don't know." He was still unable to think clearly. "Write ... teach ... devote myself to the further study of animals perhaps, and try to bring about a greater harmony between them and mankind ... I must find myself."

"I shall always be interested—in what you do," faltered Lady Cornelia, "and in sympathy with it—much more than you think. I've been so ashamed of the beastly things I said to you that day. I—I didn't mean any of them. At first I was horribly shocked at Hilda's baptism; but now since I have learned that you didn't do it, and that Rimpano baptized her, I must say that it appears to me in a different light; and while I do not agree with it, yet I am less shocked at the idea, and I respect your sincerity in the matter. At first pride held me back from admitting this to you. But if you could only believe how I have felt since I—lost you.... Anyway, I couldn't go back to England and leave you here without coming to tell you this ..."

"Yes, but you are not going to leave me here until you tell me one other thing," Hungerford said to her now. The old note of strength had come back into his voice. "That—that you will renew our . .

“Now, Chester, wait until Uncle Gregory and I return to England. You know you’re coming on the next boat, and then ...”

“And then you’ll not refuse to see me there?”

“No.” The word was just a tremulous syllable of uncertainty.

* * * *

The story is told ... I have no apologies to offer for its recital. After all, it is Chester Hungerford’s story, not mine. There remains but one interesting thing to add—the end. It came to me through other channels. When the war broke out Reverend Chester Hungerford had been one of the first to feel that he must return to England and join the army. Before going out to France as Chaplain of a company of aviators, he and Lady Cornelia had been married in Winchester.

After our meeting, in the hospital at Joinville-le-Pont, I did not hear from him for more than a year. I thought him dead. But one day shortly before I was to sail for America I received the following letter:

“My dear Royal Dixon:

“I’m home again, as you see. And we (I refer to my wife—Lady Cornelia of whom I told you) are too happy for words. We are the proud parents

of the loveliest blue-eyed boy in all dear old England. He was christened ‘Royal’ in memory of you, and of our meeting in the hospital when I was so near the other world, of that strange and beautiful friendship that sprang up between us and helped to pull me back to life.... Now we want you to come to Winchester and pay us a visit. We have a wonderful old English garden almost in the shadow of the great cathedral here; and we shall sit under the tall myrtle trees, now pink with blossom, while I talk over again the story of Hilda. I want to tell you of my plan to return to Africa to continue a study of Hilda’s people as soon as Royal is strong enough to stand the warm climate there ... I wonder what the new psychologists will think when they know that the apes do behave with intelligence and insight.

“Sincerely yours,

“CHESTER HUNGERFORD.”

About the Author



Royal Dixon (25 March 1885 – 4 June 1962) was an American animal rights activist, botanist, philosopher, and a member of the Americanization movement. He was, along with Diana Belais (1858–1944), a founder of the “First Church for Animal Rights” in 1921.

Biography

Dixon was born at Huntsville, Texas on 25 March 1885 to Elijah and Francis Elizabeth Dixon. He was educated at the Sam Houston Normal Institute, Morgan Park Academy, Chicago and later as a special student at the University of Chicago. His earliest career was as a child actor and dancer trained by Adele Fox. His last theatre appearance was in 1903 as an actor with the Iroquois theater in Chicago. He became a curator at the department of botany at the Field Museum of Chicago from 1905 to 1910. He subsequently became a staff writer at the Houston Chronicle. He also made special contributions to the newspapers of New York City, where he lectured for the Board of Education and founded a school for creative writing. His interest and attention were later directed to immigration, as a director of publicity of the Commission of Immigrants in America, and as managing editor of *The Immigrants in America Review*. He published a book on how immigrants needed to be “americanized” into a single uniform culture.

Philosophy

Royal Dixon in 1921 with a police dog “monitoring” his preaching. According to him dogs took to the Ten Commandments faster than other animals.

Dixon’s philosophical world-view was essentially panpsychic. From his studies in botany and natural science he held the view that everything was alive and that even insects and plants have personality. For example, in his book *The Human Side of Plants* he argued that plants are sentient and have minds and souls. A review in the *Nature* journal described the book as “partly a rebound from a hortus siccus botany, partly an uncritical vitalism, and partly a somewhat saddening illustration of the lack of critical balance.” The review was disappointed by this because Dixon cited many interesting facts about plants including their adaptations and movements but was criticized for anthropomorphism when comparing plant activities to humans.

Dixon was a Christian who believed that the scriptures imply that “man and beasts” equally share a future life beyond physical death. In his book *The Personality of Water-Animals* he wrote that “the Greatest of all teachers Christ knew the value of marine education for he chose as his disciples men thoroughly acquainted with the sea”.

The First Church of Animal Rights

In 1921, Dixon founded, along with Diana Belais, Dr. S.A. Schneidmann and several others, the First Church for Animal Rights in Manhattan and it had a membership of about 300 people. The inauguration of the church was held on 13 March 1921 at the Hotel Astor. Nearly 400 people attended the inauguration and the speakers included Mrs Edwin Markham, Dr John Edward Oster, Mrs Margaret Crumpacker, Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Dr. A.L. Lucas and Miles M. Dawson. A full list of the church’s objectives included:

To preach and teach the oneness of all life, and awaken the humane consciousness

To champion the cause of animals’ rights

To develop the character of youth through humane education

To train and send forth humane workers

To awaken the realization that every living creature has the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness

To act as a spiritual fountain-head and spokesman of human organizations and animal societies, and give a better understanding of their work and needs to the public.

Dixon is cited as an early activist and philosopher of animal rights. Historian Roderick Nash has commented that “Dixon tried to call Americans’ attention to the idea that all animals have ”the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”.

Personal life

Dixon lived with his partner, a local artist, Chester Snowden. Dixon’s letters and works are archived at the University of Houston Library. Dixon was buried in Houston’s Glenwood Cemetery.

